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THE MOBILE ENTERTAINER'S MAGAZINE

ISSUE 131 NOVEMBER 2010

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The Return of Worth Tuesday Afternoon, February 1

Mark Ferrell, MB Hall of Famer and founder of the influential *Worth Movement*, returns to speak for the first time in 8 years. The time is right for Mark to remind DJs of their true value as part of each client's entertainment equation. Come get inspired and equipped to make the money you're really worth.



Keynote: Champion in Any Field Tuesday, February 1

Ted DiBiase, once known as wrestling's arrogant "Million Dollar Man," has been reborn as a straight-shooting, sought-after motivational speaker. In his keynote he describes how discipline, determination and desire can separate you from the herd and make you a "Champion in Any Field."

On **February 2**, Ted will talk about his life before and after wrestling in a breakout session: "**From a Warrior to a King**." Don't miss his powerful, brutally honest story of personal transformation.



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To help you plug into the power of lighting, in this issue, Chris Bedke talks about how you can enhance your own club DJing bottom line by providing lighting for your venue. We also look at a variety fixtures (all LED-based): a moving head from American DJ, a wash light system from CHAUVET, and bar-style piece from newcomer TyLED. We throw in some info on Odyssey scrims, in the category of backdrops for ambient lighting.

And in the realm of other gear for computer DJ software power-users, the new Typhoon controller from Vestax gets a good looking-over by Gerald Johnson.

Just as lighting can be the element that helps the crowd plug into a full sensory experience, we look at some ways to draw potential clients into making a solid decision to use your services. DJ Coach Paul Kida talks about basic motivations in "Do You Care?" Stu Chisholm covers how to combat complacency and focus your energies for the best performances, while Mike Ficher shares some tips on prepping yourself for gigs. Rob Johnson points out the importance of good impressions and John Stiernberg gives a checklist for making sure your marketing message is connecting.

We are proud to introduce a well-known name in the world of sales to you, by way of an interview with, and a new column by Jeffrey Gitomer. If you haven't yet learned from this energetic and straight-forward sales guru, here's your chance.

Looking for new ways to plug into DJ income and boost your earning power? Robert Barker embarks on a new series of articles on the many options for "sea-going" DJing. He shares a whole fleet of possibilities from small party boats to major cruise line action.

To wrap up this brief outline of the powerful content you now hold in your hands, I'll mention Mobile Beat's major efforts to help DJs get connected with each other, the national industry and, of course, our magazine and conferences. Coming off another extremely successful summer tour, MB editor and gear guru Jake Feldman recounts some highlights of his summer "vacation" on the road. (Jake may well be the hardest working man in mobile DJing, at least for those weeks on tour!) The Mobile Beat / Pioneer DJ Summer Tour again achieved its goal of plugging in and powering up DJs across the nation, while also previewing the powerful experience in store for DJs who make their way to most brightly lit city in the world for the biggest mobile DJ event of the coming year: MBLVXX. See you there!

• Dan Walsh, Editor-In-Chief



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Pioneer DJ proudly presents **The Village People**, performing live at the Mobile Beat 2011 Las Vegas Conference (MBLVXX) on Wednesday, February 2 at the Top of The Riv, in the Riviera Hotel and Casino. Come party with the ultimate party and disco group as they perform their biggest hits: "San Francisco," "In Hollywood," "Go West," "In the Navy," "Macho Man"...and they promise to teach you the RIGHT way to do the "YMCA."



Also blowing the top off the Top of the Riv will be party rock powerhouse, **Warrant**, presented by the **American Disc Jockey Association** and **NLFX Professional**.

And don't forget MBLV's top-notch seminars, a wonderland of product exhibits, and the best opportunities to network with pro DJ peers of any DJ conference out there.

Plus, the 2011 Vegas show will be a milestone event celebrating 20 (XX) years of Mobile Beat Magazine in style!

Already in place are keynote speaker Ted "The Million Dollar Man" DiBiase and his show kick-off presentation, "Champion in Any Field;" the return to the MB seminar podium (for the first time since 2003) of Mark Ferrell, the Mobile Beat Hall of Famer who inspired a generation of entertainers to raise the en-

tire DJ industry to a higher level; and a whole lot more. Register at MobileBeat.com now to get the best possible deal on your pass!

Don't Miss the Thrill

Also confirmed is rap veteran Thrill Da Playa. Hailing from Jacksonville, Florida, the Dirty South legend continues to be a "forever focused" force in hip-hop after enjoying much success as an artist and the lead rapper of the multi-platinum-selling 69 Boyz ("Tootsee Roll," and more). As a producer of the critically acclaimed S.W.A.T.

Team, Thrill co-produced platinum hits like "Whoot There It Is," and "C'mon and Ride It (The Train)." Along with extensive work on



movie soundtrack music, his many credits earned him Vibe Magazine's Chairmen of the Board designation for outstanding producers. As a writer, he has penned hits for Jermaine Dupri's So-So Def Label, Lil Jon, Ying Yang Twins, and Quad City DJs.

For the last of these he wrote the Grammy-nominated theme song of the blockbuster film **Space Jam**.

Armed with new music, his new Coed Clothing line and much more,

Thrill Da Playa's main focus is to overload the world with hope and love in the new millennium.

American DJ Announces First Artist for Big Party

American DJ's long-standing love-gift to their loyal patrons continues in 2011 with another hot selection of party performers.

The "Cupid Shuffle" was released in 2007 and took the school dance scene by storm. Number 12 on the Mobile Beat-DJ Intelligence Top 200, the song has already sealed its destiny as a party favorite at weddings and most other parties as well. Cupid (www.newcupidononline.com) will



be performing his namesake hit, plus other songs like "Love Slide" and "Do The Ladies Run This Party." "Teach Me How To Wobble" is his newest developing dance craze. MBLVXX attendees will be the only mobile DJs in their areas to learn this new crowd-pleaser directly from the artist!

With Cupid and other soon-to-be-announced entertainers filling a high-energy bill at their Customer Appreciation Party, American DJ will bring a truly awesome experience to MBLVXX attendees on the evening of Tuesday, Feb. 1, 2011.

DJ University Expands with CHAUVET Sponsorship

Mobile Beat's DJ University (www.mobilebeat.com/dj-university), for many years a storehouse of knowledge helping DJs improve their skills, has undergone a major overhaul in order to serve the DJ community even better. Featuring fresh content, better integration with MobileBeat.Com, and innovative lighting manufacturer CHAUVET as a new corporate sponsor, DJ University has solidified its position as a leading educational resource for serious DJs.

DJ University, presented by CHAUVET, has gone through three incarnations: The first "administration" was headed up by Paul Beardmore, who was later assisted by Bill Smith. The current version fully integrates the educational site with its parent site, MobileBeat.Com, and extends its instructional reach. The expansion was made possible largely by the addition of a major corporate sponsor. CHAUVET's leadership stepped forward when they saw the potential to help develop the site, and especially to improve the quality and quantity of its lighting-related resources.

"In keeping with CHAUVET's long tradition of involvement in the DJ community, we are delighted to join forces with Mobile Beat to share our passion and continue educating DJs on lighting," says Vice President, Berenice Chauvet. "Today's ever-evolving technology makes it even more necessary for DJs to stay informed. DJ University is a great venue for DJs to learn the tricks of their trade. Every DJ who knows lighting has an edge."

As the presenting sponsor of the DJ University, CHAUVET's lighting experts will be providing articles to the university, along with its other contributors. Users will find a growing archive of brief articles providing a few specific action points, which they can immediately apply to business, performance or equipment selection and use. The short form is meant for easy reading on smartphones (via MobileBeat.Com's mobile-optimized interface) during spare time before a gig or any other down time a busy DJ might find.

Look for information in each Mobile Beat issue highlighting new DJU articles. And check for frequent updates at www.mobilebeat.com/dj-university. **MB**

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When the Lights Come On

WHEN THE LIGHTS GO ON, ARE YOU ON?

BY MIKE FICHER •

Mobile entertainers are show business performers. Like comedians, actors, singers, musicians, hypnotists, public speakers, improvisation players, and more, mobile entertainers are on stage—albeit a fluid, ever-evolving, not always ideal performance platform. It may not usually be a stage with curtain and footlights, but it's show business nonetheless.

LIVING IN THE LIMELIGHT

So how do you prepare for the moment when the "curtain" rises and the lights illuminate? How do you prepare during "the half"—the sacrosanct 30 minutes just before a performance when the actor is in the dressing room, preparing to go on stage?

As Oscar-winning actor Kevin Spacey explains, "It can be 30 minutes of quiet contemplation or utter fear, depending on how the performance has been going." How has your "half" been lately?

A TALE OF TWO ACTORS

Last the spring, I appeared in a local production of *Couple Dating*, an engaging comedy about a New York couple with a young child seeking to connect with other couples in similar circumstances—with unexpected results, insights gained and generous hilarity for the audience.

Eight actors comprised the cast—the primary story couple (Bobby and Tess) and the three couples they "date." I played the husband in the couple in the second to last scene of the play. Thus, we did not appear on stage until about 90 minutes into the production for what turned out to be a memorable 12-minute scene.

I was paired with a very talented actress, Jenny MacKenzie, with whom I connected well during auditions. Our call time was generally 30 minutes before the proverbial lights went on, so Jenny and I had about two hours to wait before our scene.

The backstage machinations of many theatrical productions organically develop their own preparation rhythm. Jenny and I developed ours with each other and the other actors during our 16-show run.

We rarely said two words to each other for the two hours backstage before we did our scene. Jenny often read, texted, did her makeup, dressed for the scene and, occasionally, quietly chatted with the other actors. I usually completed work on a laptop, reviewed my lines, blocking and cues, read, changed clothes and helped do the dishes at intermission (it's community theater—ac-

tors are often the crew, too!) Just before we entered the stage together, we each made our final preparations.

Jenny would check her purse for the items needed

in the scene, review her clothes and ensure that she had a finger ready to ring the doorbell on cue. Typically, I engage in some physical movement to get into character. So, just before Jenny rang the doorbell, I would round out my shoulders, cock my head slightly back and stand as erect as possible to become the confident persona of Scott.

And, after we completed our scene? We were often as chatty as two long-lost friends on a chance meeting.

Far from the result of deliberate planning, the rhythm evolved during rehearsals and the show's run, becoming a comfort zone of preparation for Jenny, myself and the rest of the cast.

SHOWTIME!

How do you prepare for your entrance on the mobile "stage," the moment when you are in the "spotlight" of the party guests' attention at your event? What is your rhythm in preparing for a gig? What do you do during your version of the half?

A significant part of your preparation may be tied to the primary role you are playing that evening. Are you an emcee? A music programmer? A director? Gamemaster? Dancer?

YES AND...

For the last six years, I've been a member of Triage, a local improvisational troupe. When we are in the half, we do a variety of exercises and short games to get the blood flowing, elevate the energy and sharpen our minds for the performance. Our final activity before heading out on stage? We form a circle, put our hands together in the center and look each other in the eye as we declare, "Got your back!"

Our preparation is a combination of best practices in the art and organically developed activities that work for our group. What works for you?

CATCH THE RHYTHM

Some entertainers may meditate, seek quiet time, exercise, or eat a small meal before a performance. In my twenty-plus years as a mobile entertainer, I've developed a pre-event rhythm of setting up 30 to 60 minutes before the scheduled start of the event or, at least, well in advance of guest arrival. Then, I walk the entire entertainment space checking not only sound, but perspective and feel.

After making any necessary tweaks in the sound, I review my notes, agenda and any other information about the event to refresh the energy I need to portray. Then, I visit the facilities to freshen up and just before I depart, look in the mirror, make sure my smile is keen, flash a Hawaiian shake hand sign to the mirror, and give a chuckle. Now, I am ready to entertain.

FIND YOUR SPACE

There is no single correct method to prepare for an event, to work the half. But, like Jenny and me, if you do not have yours yet, look for the right formula to put yourself in the best frame of mind to offer your clients a memorable event! **MB**



Mobile DJ, dance instructor, emcee, voice actor, writer, teacher, and improv comedian, Mike Ficher owns and operates Dance Express, based in Bend, Oregon. A three-time presenter and host at Mobile Beat conventions, Mike has been expanding the public's definition of mobile entertainer since 1986.



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It's Beginning to Sound a Lot Like Christmas

A MUSICAL REALITY CHECK ABOUT THE VENERABLE "HOLIDAY" PARTY

BY JAY MAXWELL •

Several years ago I was scheduled to play a party in December for a state-supported college. It wasn't the first time that I had played for this particular school, but on this occasion I was told to be sure and not say "Christmas party" any time during the event, but to refer to the celebration as a "holiday party."

There was no doubt that this request was due to the organizers trying to be politically correct. I complied with the request since I didn't want to hurt anyone's feelings. When it came time for the president of the school to give her welcome though, in her opening statement she warmly greeted everyone to the annual "Christmas party" and never once claimed that it was a holiday party.

This was not an isolated incident. Many companies will call up to schedule us for their "holiday party." "What holiday?" I want to ask them. "Is it Thanksgiving, Ground Hog Day, President's Day?" If there's an evergreen tree in the room with lights and decorations on it, a holly wreath, or decorations consisting primarily of red and green on the table, I'm betting that they are set for a Christmas party.

Even if a company calls a party held in December by a name other than "Christmas," the majority of the time they will also want some traditional Christmas tunes played to set the mood and get into the (dare I say it) Christmas spirit. Usually the sponsor of the event will want Christmas songs played during the social hour and/or the dinner hour. One thing that should be determined beforehand is whether they want only Christmas tunes during this time (one to two hours at the most) or to mix in

Christmas songs with other songs as well. If given a choice, I recommend beginning the event with mostly Christmas songs, then begin to mix in other lively, toe-tapping songs as the dinner hour progresses.

KEYS TO CHOOSING CHRISTMAS TUNES

Regardless of the event, I've had people tell me that they want a specific genre played. That is, they may come up and simply request "some rock & roll." That is too broad of a category to know what they want. Do they want The Beatles or do they want Dave Matthews? Sometimes, when they say rock & roll, they actually want an artist that I wouldn't consider in that category, such as Prince or Michael Jackson. Their definition of rock & roll may be from the early days of the 1950s or what they are hearing on today's Top 40.

The same is true for Christmas tunes. All Christmas songs are not created equal. The songs listed in this issue's Top 40 list are all uplifting, well-known, and songs that adults actually want to listen to.


Too much of a good thing is like too many slices of a birthday cake. One piece is delicious, but two pieces will give you a stomach ache. Each year we seem to get bombarded with Christmas songs on the radio and in the malls many weeks before December 25th. Some songs are so beauti-

ful that we don't mind hearing them several times in the weeks before Christmas and hearing them at the office party would also get people in the festive spirit. Other musical selections, though, are overplayed after only one spin. These are the ones that we would not want to play at the event because they've worn out their welcome after only one time per season. For starters, Elmo and Patsy's "Grandma Got Run Over By a Reindeer," "The Chipmunk Song," (let's all scream "Alvin") and "Dominick the Donkey" should be banned from the playlist of any mobile DJ. After typing these song titles, I realized that all three have animals in their title and two of the three are animals that are not even traditionally associated with Christmas.

AVOIDING THE HOLIDAY BLUES

Christmas is about celebrating the good times of family and friends gathered together to share in life's greatest joys. While many office parties have speeches by the CEO or president and perhaps door prizes to be given away, the real reason for the event should be to celebrate the camaraderie of the work force team. Keeping this in mind, we should steer clear of playing sad and often downright depressing songs as we play our Christmas songs. In Tom Reynolds book, *I Hate Myself and Want to Die* he lists the top 52 all-time most depressing songs and ranks the number one song as "The Christmas Song" by the group Newsong. This is the one about a boy buying a pair of shoes for his dying mother because he wants her to look good as she enters heaven. Sad, very sad—a sure party killer. Other downers are "Blue Christmas" by Elvis and Wham's "Last Christmas. Let's also include The Eagles' "Please Come Home for Christmas" with the line "my baby's gone, I have no friends." Playing that one would have people doubling their dose of Prozac for the night.

People also want to be treated



If given a choice, I recommend beginning the event with mostly Christmas songs, then begin to mix in other lively, toe-tapping songs as the dinner hour progresses.

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as an adult during the night. Certainly you wouldn't torture them with "The Chicken Dance" or "The Hokey Pokey," so don't tickle their ears with children's favorites like "Rudolph, The Red-Nosed Reindeer," "Frosty the Snowman," or "You're a Mean One, Mr. Grinch." You especially would not want to dedicate that last song to anyone there even if requested—the "Grinch" is likely to be the boss. The party should be lively, yet classy at all times.

Each year, we sort through our huge collection of Christmas songs only to find that many of them are not suited for office parties. Some of my favorite songs are sacred favorites like "Away in a Manger," "Silent Night," and "The First Noel." But these tunes should probably be reserved for worship time in a church service and not played at an office event.

CHRISTMAS PARTIES SURVIVE

Many companies have tightened their budgets over the past few years and have slimmed down their elaborate Christmas parties...including the entertainment. Fortunately, though, leaders at many companies, even during hard times, recognize the importance of showing their appreciation for their employees and still throw a grand event towards the year's end. Some may even still boldly call it a "Christmas party," while others have caved in to using the term "holiday party."

But regardless of the label, the mobile DJ still has the opportunity to show his or her craft by playing the right type of positive, uplifting, and age-appropriate music to set the mood. Of course, know when enough is enough of the Christmas melodies and it's time to transition into traditional party music. The key is to make this transition BEFORE someone comes up while you are playing "White Christmas" and yells, "Play Something We Can Dance To!" **MB**

*Mobile Beat's resident musicologist since 1992 (issue #11), Jay Maxwell runs the multi-unit, multi-talent entertainment company, Jay Maxwell's Music by Request, LLC, in Charleston, South Carolina. He is also a professor of Mathematics and Business at Charleston Southern University. His passion for detail and continuous research of clients' requests can be found not only in this column, but also in his annually updated music guide, **Play Something We Can Dance To**.*

Splendid Sounds of the Season

ALL I WANT FOR CHRISTMAS IS YOU	MARIAH CAREY	FAST
BABY, IT'S COLD OUTSIDE	LADY ANTEBELLUM OR MERCER/WHITING	SLOW
CAROL OF THE BELLS	LOS LONELY BOYS	INSTRUMENTAL
CHRISTMAS IN DIXIE	ALABAMA	SLOW
CHRISTMAS SONG	NAT KING COLE	SLOW
CHRISTMAS WRAPPING	WAITRESSES	FAST
DECK THE HALLS	OTTMAR LIEBERT	INSTRUMENTAL
DO YOU HEAR WHAT I HEAR	WHITNEY HOUSTON	SLOW
FELIZ NAVIDAD	JOSE FELICIANO	FAST
GOD REST YE MERRY GENTLEMEN	BELINDA CARLISLE	FAST
HAPPY HOLIDAY	PEGGY LEE	FAST
HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING	AMERICA	FAST
HAVE A HOLLY JOLLY CHRISTMAS	HARRY CONNICK, JR.	INSTRUMENTAL
HERE COMES SANTA CLAUS	ELVIS PRESLEY	FAST
HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS	PERRY COMO	FAST
I SAW MOMMY KISSING SANTA CLAUS	JOHN MELLENCAMP	FAST
IT CAME UPON A MIDNIGHT CLEAR	CAEDMON'S CALL	SLOW
IT MUST HAVE BEEN OL' SANTA CLAUS	HARRY CONNICK, JR.	FAST
IT'S THE MOST WONDERFUL TIME OF THE YEAR	ANDY WILLIAMS	FAST
JINGLE BELL ROCK	BOBBY HELMS	FAST
JINGLE BELLS	DIANA KRALL OR FRANK SINATRA	FAST
JOY TO THE WORLD	BRUCE MALAMENT	INSTRUMENTAL
LET IT SNOW	MICHAEL BUBLE	FAST
LITTLE DRUMMER BOY	BOB SEGER	SLOW
LITTLE SAINT NICK	BEACH BOYS	FAST
MERRY CHRISTMAS BABY	BONNIE RAITT/CHARLES BROWN	SLOW
MY FAVORITE THINGS	TONY BENNETT	FAST
O TANNENBAUM	VINCE GUARALDI	INSTRUMENTAL
ROCKIN' AROUND THE CHRISTMAS TREE	BRENDA LEE	FAST
RUN RUDOLPH RUN	CHUCK BERRY	FAST
SANTA BABY	MADONNA	FAST
SANTA CLAUS IS COMIN' TO TOWN	BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN OR FRANK SINATRA/CYNDI LAUPER	FAST
SLEIGH RIDE	DEBBIE GIBSON	FAST
STEP INTO CHRISTMAS	ELTON JOHN	FAST
THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS	BARRY MANILOW	FAST
THIS CHRISTMAS	JOE	SLOW
WHAT CHRISTMAS MEANS TO ME	PAUL YOUNG	FAST
WHITE CHRISTMAS	BING CROSBY OR DRIFTERS	SLOW
WINTER WONDERLAND	LOUIS ARMSTRONG	SLOW
WONDERFUL CHRISTMASTIME	PAUL MCCARTNEY	FAST

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Is Your Brand Message On Target?

BUILDING A TARGETED COMMUNICATIONS CAMPAIGN

BY JOHN STIERNBERG •



Last issue we talked about leveraging the roles of specifiers (like returning clients and agents) and influencers (like prior clients or audience members). I suggested that you stay in touch with your whole community constantly, because anyone can potentially send you a referral.

But what do you say when you stay in touch? Do you send the same communications message to everyone? If not, how do you decide what to say and to whom? This article goes deeper into the targeted communications behind brand building and referral generation, and suggests three action tips for success.

THREE TYPES OF BRAND MESSAGING

It is essential that you send consistent brand messages to everyone that you communicate with, whether they are prospective clients, specifiers, influencers, or just your friends and family. Here's a key point: Consistent does not necessarily mean identical. You need to craft slightly different messages depending on the target receiver, whether that is one person or many. Using terms from the broadcast media world, here are three complementary approaches:

Pointcasting: to one person at a time. Use this approach for proposals, contract administration, thank you notes, and related personal communication.

Narrowcasting: to a targeted small group. Use this approach for sales messages to multiple people with similar situations. Example: Offer an incentive to a group of prior clients for referring a friend.

Broadcasting: to as many people as possible. Use this approach for marketing (positioning and promotion vs. sales) messages to everyone in your community. Example: E-mail newsletters and Twitter or Facebook postings about upcoming gigs, new music or gear, or news about awards that you've won, publicity links, etc.

BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU SAY TO WHOM

It is critically important to convey a unified brand message, but also to send specific targeted content for each purpose. The differences in message content may be subtle, but it is important to keep those differences in mind as you craft your communications.

For example, you would not want to reveal your sales strategy to competitors by tweeting "Great rewards for anyone who sends me leads. Click here for more details." However, you could tweet "Just did a great charity gig for the local children's hospital

staff. Click here for pictures." That's positive brand messaging about you and your company, without getting too personal.

BUILD YOUR DATABASE

While each of your contacts wants to feel special, it is simply not practical to send personalized messages to everyone all the time. That's why it is essential to use the available media tools to build a searchable contact database. While the how-to's are beyond the scope of this article, here's a reminder. If you are using e-mail, Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Plaxo, or any type of contact management software, you already have the basic capability to create lists and subgroups.

HOW TO BUILD A TARGETED MESSAGING CAMPAIGN

Building your brand in a dynamic market requires staying in touch with your community of contacts in a systematic way. Here are three suggestions.

Action Tip 1: Get organized. Put all of your contacts in a searchable database and code them so that you can easily create lists for specific purposes. Examples of coding labels include: Past Client, Prospective Client, Audience Member, Specifier, Influencer, Team Member, Vendor, Competitor, Press, Friends and Family, etc. Note that each individual contact may fall into multiple categories (like a past client who is an influencer).

Action Tip 2: Create message templates for each sales and marketing purpose. You are probably doing this already in terms of your proposals and contracts. How about a template for referral generation messages? E-mail newsletters? Press releases that can be posted online? Creating templates will help you 1) avoid mixing sales and marketing messages when you don't want to and 2) give you a head start for next time.

Action Tip 3: Commit to an ongoing messaging campaign. Sure, those people who post 20 times a day online are annoying. But on the other hand, if you never send a message and your competitors do, you become "out of sight and out of mind." Try posting online weekly and sending an e-mail newsletter once a month to start, and see how it goes.

HERE'S THE POINT...

Whether you are pointcasting, narrowcasting, or broadcasting, your brand messaging needs to be consistent and targeted. Your searchable database is your lifeblood and a critical sales and marketing tool (perhaps that's where GoldMine got its name?).

Systematic implementation of the Action Tips is important: 1) Get organized and code your database; 2) create templates for each type of message that you send; and 3) build an ongoing campaign of messaging at regular intervals.

Next issue we'll talk about the role of agents and managers. In the meantime, best wishes for continued success in mobile entertainment! **MB**



John Stiernberg is founder of Stiernberg Consulting (www.stiernberg.com). His book **Succeeding In Music: Business Chops for Performers and Songwriters** is published by Hal Leonard Books. Contact John via e-mail at john@stiernberg.com. You can find John on LinkedIn, Plaxo, and Facebook and follow him on Twitter.

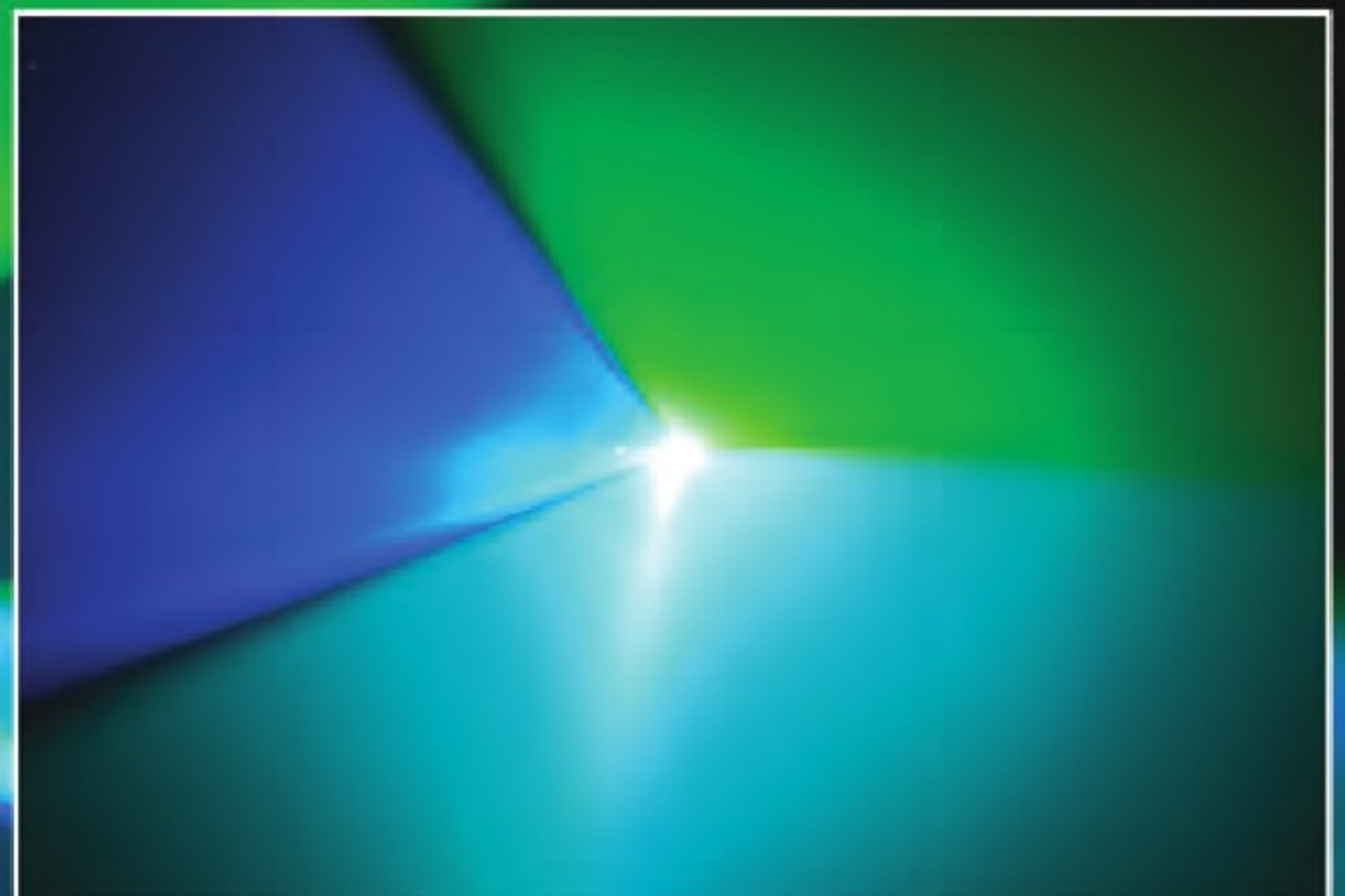
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The Last Impression Makes a Lasting Impression

DO YOU LEAVE PEOPLE WITH A POSITIVE FEELING ABOUT YOU AND YOUR ENTERTAINMENT PROFESSION?

BY ROB JOHNSON •



Rob Johnson has hosted trivia parties and game shows for more than a decade. He is the spokesperson for DigiGames and uses their equipment exclusively. He has performed throughout the United States, Europe and the Caribbean. He has also presented his

"Midweek Money" seminar at multiple conferences and conventions, including Mobile Beat and ADJA events. If you would like Rob to speak at your event or demonstrate DigiGames gear, contact him at 701-710-1657 rob@digigames.com.

I travel a lot. Today I was on an airplane and I struck up a conversation with the person next to me. He asked me what I do for a living. I told him that I am an entertainer. He actually chuckled and asked what that means. I explained that I host game shows all over, and also represent a company called DigiGames that provides entertainers with the gear to do game shows; and that was traveling to California for an event.

I got a blank look from him. I told him that I was a DJ, hypnotist, karaoke host and many other things in the entertainment business. He was suddenly fascinated. He couldn't BELIEVE that someone could make a full time living doing these types of things. He said, "You don't work. You have fun."

It got me thinking...Those of us that do this for a living probably take for granted much of the time that we get to HAVE FUN and get paid for it. Some make a lot of money. Some not as much. He was a salesman and appeared to make good money. What he didn't have in his work was fun. He made it very clear to me that he did not enjoy his job and only did it for the money.

I asked him why he didn't try to find something he DID enjoy and could still make money at? He looked at me like I was crazy. So my brief airborne encounter also got me to thinking about

my quest to educate people about the fact that you CAN make a good living as an entertainer—not just on weekends—and have a lot of fun doing it. We are very lucky to work in an industry that has those options.

The only problem with this scenario is when "DJs" ONLY do this because it is fun. They don't have a business plan. Many times these are the individuals who are cutting corners, and in the process degrading the public perception of the mobile entertainment business. We—the true professionals—will likely always have to compete with these folks, but we don't have to let them dictate what we do. There is plenty of business out there, both during the week ("Midweek Money!") and on weekends, if you are willing to work for it.

That's right, it isn't all fun. You need to get out there and WORK at your craft. I had fun chatting with this gentleman, and I think he now has a new outlook on DJs and mobile entertainers. His first impression of me was probably not spectacular. His last impression was most likely positive and definitely eye-opening. You can never take back a first impression, but it is the LAST impression that makes a LASTING impression.

Keep this in mind when you are performing. Give your client your best effort every time and leave them wanting you back. Repeat business and referrals are the best way to take your business to another level. And leaving good impressions wherever you go is definitely a good way to go through life. **MB**

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Introducing...The Cruise Ship DJ

ESSENTIAL INFO ON DIFFERENT SEA-GOING DJ GIGS

BY RICHARD BARKER •

Welcome aboard a series of articles looking at the experiences of DJs who work on ships plying the high seas and other bodies of water. But before we get to first-hand experiences of both short and long-term DJ events, let's look at each type of cruise ship DJ in turn.

Being a DJ on a cruise ship is very different from working land-based gigs. There are many considerations to be made before "shipping out" and many potential pitfalls and mistakes for the novice DJ. First, let's define exactly what a cruise ship DJ is. There are more variations on the sea-going DJ concept than you might expect.

TYPES OF CRUISE SHIP DJs

Resident Cruise Ship DJ. This is what typically comes to mind when one hears the expression "cruise ship DJ." An example would be a six-month contract with Royal Caribbean to be an on-board DJ for a club or lounge. The DJ is employed as a staff member.

Extended-Sail DJ. This is an entertainer working for a luxury yacht line like Seabourn, sailing to and from Europe or Alaska for one month-long voyage at a time. In this case, the DJ is short-term crew/staff.

Portside DJ. This DJ is hired to board a vessel while it is in port, for example, when the ship is loading or unloading passengers in port and preparing to sail. This can be for one event or as a regular gig on the same ship a few times a month. The DJ is an independent contractor hired by a third party.

Party Boat or Casino Ship DJ. This kind of DJ sails daily and provides entertainment for the public or for private events. These vessels sail within close proximity to their home ports. This DJ could be an employee or independent contractor.

DJ for a One-Time Cruise Event. This usually involves a corporate or private client who has chartered a smaller vessel for a specific function. This type of event could be on a high end-yacht or similar private ship. The DJ is an independent contractor hired directly by the client or by the

company running the vessel.

A note on getting paid: Make sure you know who is paying you! It sounds obvious, but quite a few vessels use third party payment companies, so you must know where the money should be coming from. If it's a private charter, your client is probably paying, but if it is a casino boat or cruise ship, they may require you to send an invoice to them.

We'll take a closer look at each of the different gig types, starting with the last one first.

DJING ONE-TIME CRUISE EVENTS

LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION

This could be the hardest or easiest type of cruise gig, depending on where the ship is located. Once you have the reservation, the first thing to check is the physical location where you will be boarding the ship. Determine whether the boat is within a port authority, in a private berth or marina, or at a public location. (See the sidebar on the importance of documentation relating to the different types of location). Once you have the location, consider how to get there. Some things to remember: Many roads within a marina or port are not marked or picked up by GPS or online mapping services; also, note that due to tighter security these days, roads that used to be open are now closed—there may only be one way into the area.

Parking can be an issue, whether it's a public or private location. Quite often your vehicle has to be parked in one place

for security reasons, while your load-in to the ship is at another location. Strength, endurance and a very good trolley with sturdy wheels are all necessities for dealing with this type of situation. You may need a change of shoes. And certainly do not go on to the ship with your performance attire; carry deodorant and be ready to freshen up once on the ship.

Find out the load-in time and when you can arrive. This is very important because sometimes the boat may not be there yet if you arrive too early, or if you arrive at a certain time and try to load in, it may conflict with the loading of supplies on the ship.



Sharing a tight gangway is NOT fun. Obtain the phone number for the skipper and find out the appropriate time well in advance of the gig, and allow plenty of time to board on the day of the gig.

Make sure all your equipment can get on to the ship in one load (more on minimizing your rig below) and that your cart is sturdy and balanced well enough to go up and down steep inclines. The gangways are rarely horizontal. Make extra sure your equipment is strapped securely on the cart. Just recently, one of my DJs lost a powered speaker to the deep because of just this issue and ended up having to only use only one speaker for the entire gig.

SHIP-SHAPE GEAR

The small, one-time charter usually means tight spaces to operate in, so do not bring a big amp and speaker system. Try to be as compact as possible. Specifically, the smaller the ship, the lower the ceilings and the smaller the doors and entrances. I once had the unpleasant experience of bringing my tall Bose L1 (a stick-



style, all-in-one speaker system) to a charter ship only to find the ceilings were too low and I could not fully assemble the unit! Get measurements beforehand so you can bring appropriate equipment. In many cases you'll do well with a portable PA like the Peavey Messenger, Kustom Profile 2, or even one of B-52's smaller all-in-one setups. Powered speakers can also be a good fit, but you'll often not be able to raise them to their normal height on their normal stands.

An important note on the subject of speaker stands: The top-heaviness of raised speakers combined with the rolling motion of the ship means that if you use stands, they must be tied down. The smaller the ship, the greater the instability. I prefer to use the ship's tables or I bring a mount I designed myself for securing speakers to poles; this way I never risk a speaker toppling over.

If you are going to use a laptop make sure you have a surge protector and travel plug. Sometimes a vessel is made in a different country, and the plug sockets are European or from other countries, not good if you cannot plug in with an adapter. The power will definitely surge, as it relies on the ship's engine, so you

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must be prepared for spikes. Also, make sure you have a way to tie down your laptop. There are cases designed to do this, fitting the laptop and preventing it from falling or moving.

Just as on land, you have to be aware of potential interference with any wireless mics you might be using. The difference is that aboard ship wireless communication is heavily in use, so you have to be prepared to change frequencies and find usable channels. And it goes both ways: Test your microphone to ensure you're not affecting the ship's radio. If you're interfering I am sure the captain will tell you very quickly!

JUST SAY NO TO THE SHIP'S PA

Patching into a vessel's sound system is a big "no-no" on cruise ships and also not suggested on smaller vessels for liability reasons. On a big ship, you just don't know how far and wide you could be broadcasting to—it could be over the entire ship! Not good for your intimate wedding reception.

On the smaller ship, it's a technical issue. A few years ago, I was on a large private yacht sailing from Dobbs Ferry, NY down the Hudson to Manhattan, DJing a corporate event for a private HR company. The captain insisted it would sound much better if I patched into the ship system. Being a bit green, I did so...and by the time we ended the cruise, I had blown all his speakers. His finger was pointing at me but in reality I never pushed the sound very loud; even with the sound coming out on a lower-powered "booth" setting, the ship's speakers simply could not cope. The lesson here is never to use the onboard PA, unless it has been seriously tested by a previous DJ who has cranked his volume. Don't be the first to try it!

R-E-S-P-E-C-T

Just as Lady Soul demands, a ship is a "lady" that requires respect. Certainly satisfy the client's needs, but always make sure you treat the vessel like the owner's or skipper's baby. I know a DJ who gets private work every month on a local party vessel simply because he treated the ship and its crew with the utmost respect. Previous DJs were never referred again because they always complained of cramped conditions and usually caused damage when getting their gear on and off the ship. Romance the staff and schmooze the skipper and do a great job and you should get future work.

In our next installment, I will cover landing that six or nine-month dream cruise gig on a resident staff basis and also how to market effectively to the cruise industry. And for those not interested in that time commitment, I'll also cover short term and even weekly or daily options in future articles. **ME**



Richard Barker is an award winning DJ who has performed at weddings and corporate events around the world, for thousands of clients over the last 15 years. Richard provides DJs exclusively to Royal Caribbean cruise line and Club Med. Richard is the founder and CEO of the national DJ service, Academy DJs. He is also co-founder of Limbotogo.com, as well as being a certified stage and clinical hypnotist. He can be reached at Richard@AcademyDJs.com.

DOCUMENTATION

Not having the proper documents can prevent you from boarding the ship, potentially missing your event completely. During your event preparation you have to understand exactly what the location is and what is needed.

Every port authority is different and so is every ship. Port Everglades in Fort Lauderdale, Florida has different rules than the Port of Bayonne in New Jersey. Make sure you know what they are. Some ports require you to have an annual port badge where you have to submit fingerprints and paperwork as well as attend a security course. Others will issue you a day pass. There are ports that require you to be on the vendor list at the port while others do not.

Ports each have their own requirements but you should always be prepared for some security checks, as well as having your equipment go through two separate x-ray machines (One portside and one aboard ship). Sometimes a police sniffer dog will give you and your gear the once-over. Make sure you have your port badge or visitor badge lined up before the day of the event and on the day do not forget your photo I.D.

Sometimes there are fees for your badge and training as well as for parking, so be prepared to have cash with you. The smaller ports may not require so many checks and the private charter probably very few or none, but always be prepared with at least photo identification.



Here Comes Summer



ISUZU

Mobile Beat

ONCE AGAIN MOBILE BEAT VISITS DJs ALL AROUND THE US

BY JAKE FELDMAN •

Two years ago a decision was made by Mobile Beat management to undertake the most unprecedented and intensive trade show yet. It was decided that the summer regional show concept had likely run its course and that perhaps a more ambitious summer experience would be needed—not only to provide education, networking, and exposure to the latest gear, but also to whet appetites for the granddaddy of ‘em all, Mobile Beat Las Vegas, by bringing a small taste of the big show to as many markets as possible. >>>

And so began the Mobile Beat Tour in 2009, with fifteen stops in markets that mostly had never been visited by a national publication or touring educational DJ entity. We saw faces new and old, and some DJs who had never heard of a national industry—let alone been face-to-face with some of the industry’s leading minds and manufacturers. Indeed, 2009 was an excellent tour filled with firsts, fun, and a fantastic beginning to the high point of every summer to follow.

SOPHOMORE YEAR

This year, with memories of the previous year in our heads, we embarked from Des Moines, IA (home of Mobile Beat), en route to Salt Lake City—by way of 17 other cities. In true show biz fashion, for the 2010 tour, more stops were added,

as well as more staffing and more sponsors—meaning the production didn’t exactly travel light. We heartily welcomed **Pioneer DJ** once again as our title sponsor for the tour. Also jumping on board this year were **Open Air Photo Booth**, **American DJ**, **QSC Audio**, **Odyssey Innovative Designs**, **Line-6**, **Hercules**, **DJ Trivia**, **ERG Music**, and the **American Disc Jockey Association**.

And, of course, a big portion of each tour program was the educational component. Along for the ride this year to make seminar presentations were a few fresh but familiar faces, including Jason Weldon, Jason Spencer, and Dan Nichols. Joining us once again were veteran speakers Andy Ebon, Ben Stowe, and Danny Brewer. The powerful combination of speakers made the tour the best educational value for DJs of any summer industry event out there!



WEEK 1

This year’s tour followed sort of a reverse version of last year’s route. We loaded up the Pioneer DJ Flavored Mobile Beat One vehicle and headed east in preparation of kicking off the tour in the Motor City, Detroit. Central Michigan ADJA President Mark Evans (who also is co-moderator on start.mobilebeat.com) once again proved one of the best hosts on the tour—meaning that the jaunt kicked off with a bang.

Hitting the ground running, we rounded lake Erie and headed for Niagara Falls, NY, the home of the Western New York Mobile Entertainers Association and the perfect location to also to partner with the co-hosting Canadian Disc Jockey Association from just across the border. The second stop proved the second-best attended and the best locally-hosted, and also featured one of the most receptive audiences of the entire tour. Led by John

Klukowski, Sr., Robert Hawkins, the WNMV /CDJA-hosted event would indeed be a hard act to follow for other cities and other chapters.

From there, the tour rolled on to Pittsburgh and one of my personal favorite chapters of the ADJA, headed by Gordon Slagle (and big “props” to Mark Tishko for his part in the event). At the next stop, in Edison, New Jersey we were welcomed by Darryl “Jake” Jacobson, Randy Rae, and the New Jersey Disc Jockey Network. This stop gave us the best attendance of any stop on the tour and also the added bonus of an intimate performance by friends of Mobile Beat, Henn Dogg, T-Dynasty, and Wonder Mike (formerly of the Sugar Hill Gang). Finishing out the week in style was our yearly visit to New England—this time with a stop in Providence, Rhode Island. In The Ocean State, Phil Westin and Rob Peters organized a successful cap to Week One of the 2010 tour.

WEEK 2

After a weekend off to recharge our batteries, we headed down the eastern seaboard to Washington, D.C., where Mobile Beat's first ever trip to America's capital city properly kicked off the second leg, taking us to Richmond, VA, Raleigh, NC, and ending in Charlotte, NC. While the southeastern crowds were not quite as large as the Buffalo and Edison stops, the attendees certainly were very receptive to presentations by Ben Stowe, Jason Weldon, as well as our sponsors, resulting in a great leg had by all. The region is filled with great ADJA chapters—a fact which was cemented by this segment of the tour.

Richmond and Charlotte proved to be excellent anchor stops on this leg, with Richmond seeming ready to challenge Charlotte's reputation as the best host in the region on last year's tour. Special thanks go out to William Beasley of the Charlotte ADJA chapter and Martin Ramirez of the Richmond chapter for making those stops so successful!

WEEK 3

The third leg was indeed an adventure, with Andy Ebon, Danny Brewer, and Ben Stowe joining our traveling DJ road-show as it worked its way through the humidity of the lower Midwest, including Missouri, Kansas, and Texas. The major stops of this leg again turned out to be the second and fourth stops—Wichita and Houston—

—once again going against the theory that the largest markets will yield the biggest crowds.

Special thanks on this leg go out to our hosts in Wichita (Central Kansas Chapter of the ADJA), Houston, and St. Louis: Ron Brown, Roy Dueitt, and Chris Johnson. Also, I would like to personally thank Randy Roberson (who is one of the nicest guys in the business), the president of the Dallas-Ft. Worth ADJA chapter for his immense help in loading out.

WEEK 4

And so we saw ourselves with three weeks and three legs of the tour behind us, as we sped on to stop #14 in San Diego, and along what is known to Katy Perry fans as The Golden Coast. This leg, which was similar to the first leg's path on last year's schedule, included stops in the aforementioned laid back city of San Diego, Beverly Hills, San Francisco, Sacramento and the definitely-not-in-California municipality of Salt Lake City, UT.

Starting off in San Diego is always great with the help of Mike Ryan, who you might know by his alternate moniker, Dr. Frankenstand. From there, we traveled into the heart of Beverly Hills to a great new venue named The Mark for Events and had a blast with Danno Metoyer and Ken Heath. Then in the Bay Area, we



rocked Newark before heading to A Magical Place (another interesting venue name) in Galt. Finally, we tore across the mountains and salt flats to end up in Salt Lake City, UT, which features some of the prettiest scenery around.

The last leg was quite the experience, with Ben Stowe, Jason Spencer, and Mike Buonaccorso, Jr. along for the ride. While we may have been a bit tired from the weeks of hard touring, we were excited to be on the West Coast, truly one of the hotbeds for Mobile DJs. Those of you following along on The Crossfader Show (streaming live) saw the strong stops of Beverly Hills and Galt on the internet; and those in person know that Ben Stowe's jokes got even cornier as the legs went on.

AFTERMATH

So once again we traversed 8,000 miles to visit our DJ brethren with useful information, new toys, and networking opportunities galore. What we saw across the country was a rebounding economy, an overwhelmingly positive national industry as a whole, and some strong markets filled with dedicated professionals who care deeply about giving our profession a much-needed lift in notoriety that can only come when we are educated, properly trained, and ready to provide the best possible service to our clients.

I will note, however, that some things, it seems, will never change. Wherever we went, there were one or two cynics that said

"That will never work in my market!" After hearing this in every market, it might be surmised that nobody should ever try any new idea ever anywhere!. Any new idea can work anywhere—it's a matter of finding the customer to sell that new idea to, and finding the way in which to sell to that customer.

It is refreshing though, to see the business thriving nationally through dedicated and skilled craftsmen helping their peers, veterans and greenhorns alike. The tour was created as a way to better reach out to DJs on a local level without them having to travel during their busy summer season—and if this summer's tour was any indication, 2011 will be bigger, badder, and better than 2010.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Our tour theme song, "Lala Song" by Bob Sinclair (Featuring Henn Dogg, Wonder Mike, and Master Gee of The Sugar Hill Gang) reminisces about "back, back, back in the day when the DJ spun all night." However, it's clear, after coming out and visiting with so many of you, that the state of our DJ union is strong, and DJs do still spin all night all over the U.S.A.

If you haven't made the investment in your business yet, we would like to formally invite you out to the big brother of the summer tour, MBLVXX, happening January 31 to Feb 3, 2011 at the Riviera Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas, Nevada. See you in Vegas...and see you on the road! **MB**

Do You Care?

PART ONE OF TWO: TRUE CARING DEMANDS INTEREST, RESPONSIBILITY AND AWARENESS



BY PAUL KIDA, THE DJ COACH •

A few months ago we had the privilege of having Jim Cerone, author of *The Perfect Host* series, speak at our monthly ADJA meeting in Denver, Colorado. His seminar was excellent throughout, giving our group food for thought about how we can better ourselves as DJ/MCs and improve on our skills as event hosts. However, there was one simple sentence that he said that really hit me as being the basis and foundation of how our businesses should be run. That one sentence was "You just need to care!"

To me that was one of the most powerful expressions of the entire seminar. It revolves around one simple word and yet that word encompasses a vast array of standards that, when applied in our life and business, will make us stand out from everyone else.

Have you ever stopped to think about how much meaning is embodied in a word we often take for granted? "Of course I care!" you might insist, or you may say, "I care about my clients, my business and my performance." And you may very well be correct. What we are going to do in this article is dig deeper into the various meanings and attributes of the word care. We will talk about what is truly entailed in a more meaningful practice of "caring" and how it can have a lasting, positive effect on our businesses and our lives.



Paul Kida, The DJ Coach, is a founding member of the Colorado Disc Jockey Association. He owns JAMMCATTS DJ Entertainment (www.jammcattsdj.com), and is a regular speaker at Mobile Beat DJ Shows.

INTEREST

One of the first definitions of the word care is "interest." This aspect is most important from the beginning of our first contact with the client clear to the end of the event as we are packing up to go home. We must show a genuine interest in our clients. How do we do this? Just simply be sincere in everything we say and do. This is really lacking in our society today in every industry I can think of. It seems that

To be truly interested in your clients, take the time to listen to them intently.

many people just don't care about doing a good job anymore, so if you really do care, it will show through. People can easily see through hypocrisy or a faked show of concern. We need to avoid the stereotype (NOT my stereotype, but people in general) of the used car salesman shown as slick, cheesy and out to make a quick buck. The guy who says, "Yeah, I hear you," but never really listens or pays attention to a word we say.

To be truly interested in your clients, take the time to listen to them intently. Find out about their likes and dislikes, about who they are, what makes them tick. Most people enjoy the feeling that they are the center of interest, and everyone likes feeling important. By showing a sincere interest we can form a personal bond with our clients at that very first phone call or meeting. It seems to me that this world is becoming more and more im-

personal. Don't get me wrong, computers, email and smartphones are great tools. I don't know how I could run my business anymore without them. However, isn't it nice to actually speak to someone on the phone instead of a recorded message with ten different prompts? I know you can't always answer the phone on every call, but you CAN return the call promptly and be sincerely interested in each potential client and their events. This will lead them to see that you are more than "just the DJ" that will be there, but are someone who can handle the responsibility of caring for their one and only special day!

RESPONSIBILITY

Another definition of the word care is "responsibility." When we truly care, we are willing to take on the responsibility for how the event goes, unless it is something totally out of our control, of course. We become accountable for the proper preparation of the music, announcements, specialty dances, any other important details, and how the whole event flows. When we care, we act responsibly by showing up ahead of time so we have plenty of time to set up, by having proper dress and grooming, and by being courteous and polite to everyone around us (even if they are not!).

We show responsibility by interacting with the other vendors and venue staff in a professional manner at all times. Because the client has hired you, remember that you are working for them, and more importantly, it is your job to make them look good, which includes making them look smart for hiring one of the best DJ/MCs in the business! If you really do care, you will take on the responsibility of the success of each event, viewing each one as if it were the most important event you have ever done.

"What's going on?" "What's happening next?" "What are they doing?" Have you ever been to a wedding or other event and heard a number of the guests asking those or similar questions? Worse yet, have you ever been to an event as a guest and

heard the DJ asking questions such as these? If you are the DJ for an event, this should NEVER happen!

AWARENESS

This brings us to another important aspect of caring, which is “awareness.” Simply put, it’s just knowing what is going on and knowing how to react to different situations. Sometimes at an event, we become so involved with what we are doing that we may fail to pay attention to what is going on around us.

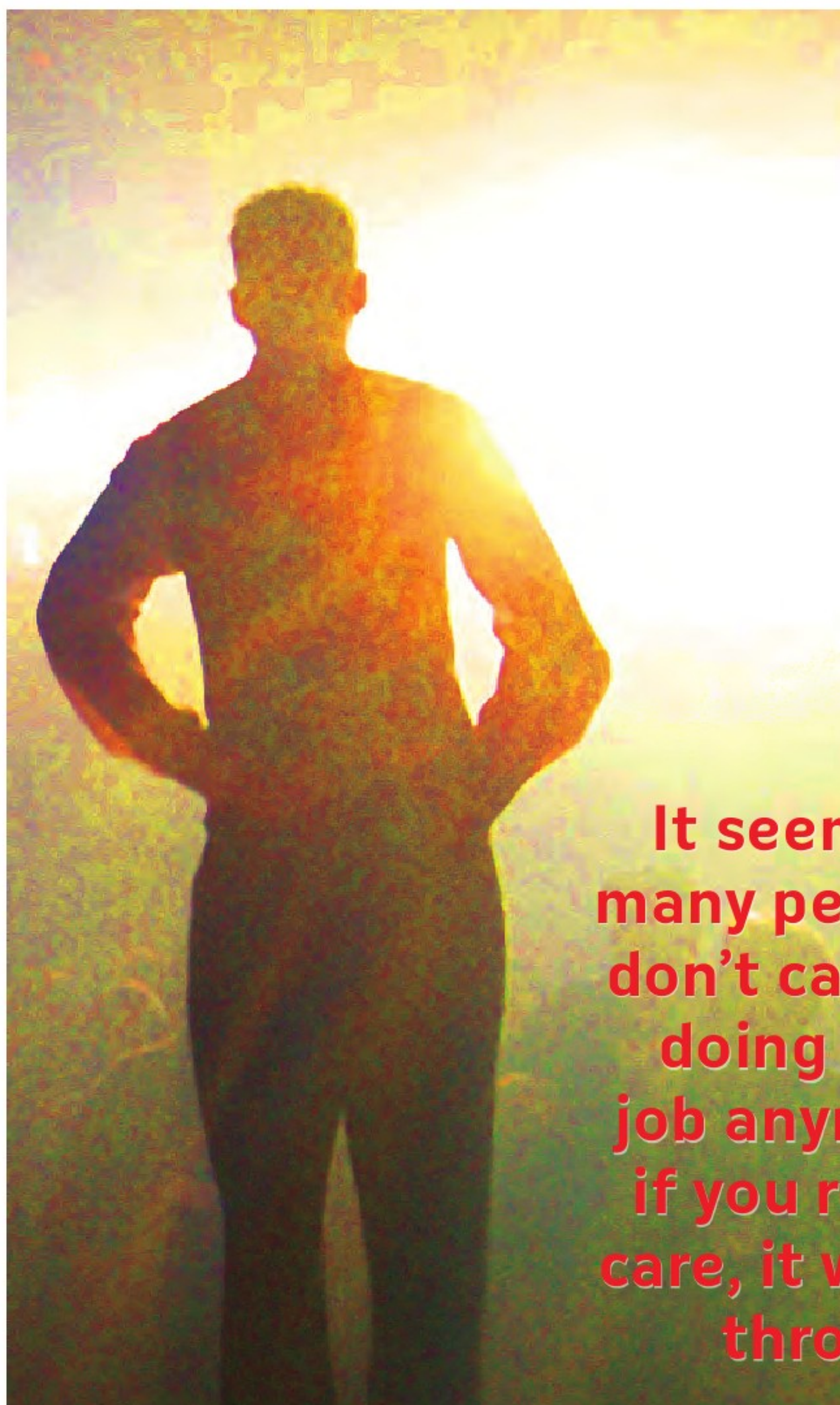
I’ll give you a brief example: My partner and I were entertaining for a wedding reception and things were going along exactly as we had planned with the bride and groom. It was mid-July and temperatures were extremely high. The venue had air conditioning that kept things comfortable, though not what you would call cool. The guests were doing okay and dancing. However, the same could not be said for the five-tiered wedding cake in the corner that had started looking like the Leaning Tower of Pisa! I suppose we could have done nothing and just said to each other, “Wow, watch this. It’s going to be a disaster!” But, we just couldn’t let that happen to this couple, so after alerting the catering staff and helping to secure the cake (for the time being!), we quickly suggested to the bride and groom that maybe they should consider cutting the cake now before it turned into a disaster. They both readily agreed and thanked us for helping them to avoid a catastrophe. By showing awareness and by taking the needed action, we showed to them that we really did care about them and their day.

If you have been in the business for any time at all, you know that there are a myriad of things that can go wrong at any event that are simply out of your control. We have seen time and again the effects of poor preparation on the part of others; we know that we should stay aware of and be able to make the necessary adjustments. These are things like: no knife when it comes time to cut the cake; no toasting glasses for the bride and groom (or they pour for everyone, then forget the bride and groom); the florist forgetting the throwing bouquet; and so on. These are just small things that you can check on after you have set up and before the guests get there, if you really care about how things will flow.

I’ll give you one more quick example: The bride and groom were about to make

their grand entrance. As the bride was exiting the limo, somehow she got a big grease stain on the bottom of her gown and she was very upset. The bridesmaids took her into the restroom and got most of it off, but she was still pretty upset. While they were cleaning the gown, I went

deal over something you can’t even see!” But because I could see on her face how much it bothered her (being aware of the situation and her feelings about it), and I really did care about how her day went, I added a small touch to the grand entrance announcement and she was all smiles the



It seems that many people just don't care about doing a good job anymore, so if you really do care, it will shine through.

inside to the guests and made a little revision to the grand entrance. After being announced as “Mr. and Mrs.,” the whole audience shouted out in unison, “Cindy, you look beautiful!” The look on her face immediately brightened up and the rest of the night went great. The truth is that you couldn’t see anything wrong with her dress, but after all of her planning and expense for the gown TO HER it was a huge thing. I could have thought, “Wow, she is a total bridezilla making such a big

rest of the evening. Awareness of your surroundings is an essential part of genuine caring.

In this article, we have covered a few of the aspects of what it means to really care about your clients and their special event. I will cover more in the next issue, so tune in again for Part 2! **MB**

Please send any comments on this article, suggestions for future articles or questions to djcoach@mobilebeat.com.

The UN-Comfort Zone

SITTING STILL AND RESTING ON YOUR LAURELS
IS A SURE WAY TO LET THE WORLD PASS YOU BY

BY STU CHISHOLM •

Your equipment is set up, you've changed into your tux and you're looking over the evening's itinerary as you await the arrival of your audience. The forms you use make the job a snap; you just run down the list, plugging in your standard routines as the night progresses. Sure you hit 'em with the newest, hottest music when the time is right, but you're also relaxed enough to check in on Facebook, toss out a tweet to your followers or quickly advance your caper in Mafia Wars. Your pulse never goes above 90 beats-per-minute.

With proficiency comes confidence, and our mindset reflects this. But having done hundreds or maybe even thousands of weddings and other events, your actions can become nearly automatic, like driving a car. But is this a good thing? Or might it be a silent alarm, alerting you to a problem?

COOL...OR COLD?

We've all seen people who are inflexible. While they might have a world of experience, they also may have gotten stuck in their ways, unable to adjust to new conditions or situations. A sudden change or problem can throw them, taking them by surprise to the point where they fumble, while up to that point, they probably felt quite comfortable. Does this sound familiar?

This isn't a hard-and-fast rule, but I always feel like I'm doing my best work when I'm walking that edge of my comfort zone; a space where I have control and a clear direction, yet have added

enough innovation, novelty or even just a new piece of gear that I'm just ever so slightly uneasy. It not only helps me to improve over time, keeping my show fresh, but helps me to stay alert, attentive and focused. If I am able to give some of my attention to an instant message or even a call on my cellphone, it tells me that I'm NOT FOCUSED ENOUGH on the party at hand.

EMBRACE CHANGE

This also applies to before and after the gigs. At the Mobile Beat show in Las Vegas last February, Andy Ebon gave an excellent presentation on the changing face of marketing in the twenty-first century. Young couples communicate in young ways. If you're not on Facebook and/or using Twitter, you may not even be on your prospect's radar. Jorge Lopez took this concept a bit further in another seminar, breaking down our potential clientele by generation, and giving insights as to how best to approach them. I don't think that Andy and Jorge had teamed-up on this topic!

My guess is that they both perceive the reality that is the wedding market: Those who become too "comfortable" and don't change with the times will not connect with their intended customers.

Being in the music-playing business, we should be more than comfortable with a constant background of change. From week to week, new music is released, and tried-and-true favorites fall by the wayside. It is a continuum,

and what you play this weekend may not occur to you or anyone else a year or two from now. There will always be those tunes that are impossible to ignore today but gone tomorrow, and those tunes that will hang on seemingly forever. I'd be surprised if the year 2100 rolled around and people aren't still partying to "Old Time Rock & Roll" or "Y.M.C.A." somewhere.

By the same token, we may find things that work each and every time, yet a year down the road might make party guests groan! Yet the Hokey Pokey and Chicken Dance roll on and on. As Kenny Rogers sang in "The Gambler," "You have to know when to hold 'em, know when to fold 'em." Don't become so attached to any part of your show that you can never give it up if the changing times demand it. Yet be aware of your audience enough to know when that old chestnut will be the perfect song or activity for the moment! This can ONLY be accomplished by FOCUS—by paying attention to what matters and shutting out distractions. Don't dread a curve ball, but let it energize you. Be the solution to

YOU ARE LEAVING
The
Comfort Zone



*Stu Chisholm, a mobile DJ in the Detroit area since 1979, has also been a nightclub DJ, done some radio, some commercial voice-over work and has even worked a roller skating rink! Stu attended the famous Specs Howard School of Broadcasting and has been a music collector since the age of seven. Stu's guide to the profession, *The Complete DJ*, was recently released by ProDJ Publishing.*

If I am able to give some of my attention to an instant message or even a call on my cellphone, it tells me that I'm NOT FOCUSED ENOUGH on the party at hand.

a couple's problem by thinking on your feet, having some emergency items in your bag of tricks. (I once saved a cake-cutting ceremony by having a serving set on-hand.) Use that problem, circumstance or setback to shine!

Well-known mobile DJ Randy Bartlett has also given much thought to this idea. In fact, it's the basis for his 1% Solution DVDs, which give you an excellent tactic to deal with continuous change. His advice is simple: Don't try for huge, sweeping changes to any facet of your show. Simply pay attention, maybe take notes, and then try to make small, incremental increases—each time a one percent improvement over the last show! Over time, those one percents will add up to a great deal of improvement. It is also a way to respond to the continuum of constant change. As with the above, this is also an idea to apply beyond the gig; the office, vehicle, marketing and all other facets of your business.

DON'T MAKE ALL THE MISTAKES BY YOURSELF

Conferences like the Mobile Beat shows, DVDs like Randy's and

the many books available at the Mobile Beat bookstore and elsewhere give you the benefit of many decades of DJ experience. As professional as the authors and presenters are, they've made ALL of the mistakes as they built their businesses and gained stature in the mobile DJ industry. Benefit from them! Making a few errors here and there is unavoidable. Making ALL of them yourself is.

So remember: the next time you're feeling right at home at an event, maybe yawning as your guests are enjoying themselves, listen to that inner alarm and ask yourself, "What am I missing?" If you're honest, I can guarantee you'll be able to answer that question yourself!

Until next time, safe spinnin'! **MB**

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Audio to Go: Working Outside the Box

FORMER RADIO JOCK BRIAN HINES TELLS WHY AND HOW HE TRADED STUDIO SUCCESS FOR MOBILE SATISFACTION

Two decades ago, Brian Hines got his start as a DJ on the Charlotte, NC airwaves. Although he enjoyed a successful radio career for 10 years, during the second half of his on-air stint, Hines got a taste of mobile DJing, courtesy of a radio colleague.

Within a few years he had eased out of his studio chair and was out on the dancefloor interacting directly with his audience. Not content to stay put, Hines founded Audio to Go, which is now celebrating its 10th in business.

A man of few words with a quiet personality away from the action, when it's party time, Hines transforms into an exciting, interactive entertainer. "It's funny," says the mobile pro, "because people see me as this reserved, shy guy. But then when they see me on the mic or at an event, they're like, 'Is this the same guy?' I have a really enthusiastic and energetic style when I'm DJing, but off-stage I'm really quiet and just speak when needed."

And he spoke to us at length about his journey to success in the mobile DJ world. Here is part of that conversation.

Mobile Beat: ...Here we are with Brian Hines. So you haven't done the radio thing for a while...really enjoyed the crowd interaction that you don't have as a radio jock, I assume.

Brian Hines: Correct. Being locked up in a box versus seeing everybody having fun and all the smiles on people's faces; it really wasn't a hard decision to make at all.

M B: Audio To Go--it started out as just yourself. Now, I understand you're a multi-op. How long was it until you expanded the company?

B H: Well, really from the beginning I started having people work with me. Currently we actually have about 10 people on staff. My dream has always been to grow this

into a large operation, and I believe it's really on the right track to do that. I enjoy learning from others in the business that have been successful with their multi-ops and always continue to strive to take Audio To Go to that next level.

Actually, Mike Walter from Elite Entertainment in New Jersey has been my main mentor over the last few years and I look forward to taking Audio To Go to that level. He's got about 40 employees, I believe.

M B: I understand you're mainly into wedding receptions. Tell us a little bit about your events and what's unique about your entertainment approach.

B H: We do send out a two-person crew: a master of ceremonies and a music mixer. And that allows us to run a smoother event, I believe. We can be a lot more interactive than just doing it as a one-person show.

M B: Do you ever offer a lower-priced package with just one person or is the two-person crew always required?

B H: We do offer a one-person show, but we really push for the two-person show. And once our clients see it in effect they really understand why we do it that way.

M B: You've been attending the DJ conferences for a while. What's their impact on your business? Why do you attend the DJ shows?

B H: Oh, gosh. Every time I come back from one of the conventions I'm just so fired up and just so energized, especially the Mobile Beat conference. Well, that's really the only one I go to. I've been to a couple of the regional ones here over in Tennessee as well. But I've been attending the Mobile Beat for about 10 years. And being in February, it's kind of in that lull time, January-February-March, where a lot of mobile businesses are slow. And so you start feeling like, "Gosh, are things ever going to pick up?"

But then when you come back from Mobile Beat you're just so fired up. You're ready for the new season. There





have been times where times have been hard, and I'm like, "Well, am I going to be able to make this year to the convention?" And when I come back I'm just so ready to start. And so my office people are always like, "You've got to go because you always come back so excited."

M B: Do you ever bring any of your staff along, or is it just something that you use for your personal growth?

B H: In the past we've been so small that I have never done that. But that is my plan in the future. So I would like to start bringing a couple of our extra guys.

M B: How is the wedding market in the Carolinas? What's the average disc jockey go for?

B H: Well, our average rate for weddings is around \$1200. The average rate for other DJs in our area would probably be about \$600 to \$700. The reason why our service is a little more is for the simple fact that I like to make sure that everything is exactly how it needs to be, like paying my guys exactly what they're worth. I don't like to short-change them. I like my staff to know that they're appreciated. And if I don't pay them what they're worth, then I don't feel like they're going to do the job that I want them to do.

M B: Can you tell me a little bit about your training without giving away any of your big secrets?

B H: Well, it's not too much of a big secret. Actually like I had told you before, Mike Walter is one of our biggest mentors over the last couple years and we actually got a training program

from him, since he had already designed it and successfully implemented it into his company. So we took that. And then we did change some stuff because a Jersey wedding is totally different from a Carolina wedding. So we made some changes and tweaks. It's a 16-week course that we put all our guys through. In the last two years it's just been an amazing change that we've seen with the growth of the company.

M B: How do you promote your business?

B H: ...For the first five, six, seven years we were heavily putting ads out on the Web. Just in the last couple years we really realized that most of those ads don't work anymore. I don't know if it's because of our price point, where we are anymore.

But it does go back to word of mouth. We get most of our business—I would say 80 percent—from repeat clients, personal referrals, and guests that see us at events. We also belong to ISIS and NASE, some of those industry networking groups, and those really help as well.

M B: You guys won a big award for your ADJA chapter, didn't you? Can you tell me a little bit about how that all got going?

B H: Yeah. That was very rewarding. We actually started an ADJA chapter here in the Carolinas about two years ago, and our chapter has been really active, and we won the Chapter of the Year in 2009 out of about 60 or so ADJA chapters. **MB**



Straight-Shooting Sales Sensation



A DIRECT DISCUSSION
WITH THE EDGY
ACE OF SALES

Jeffrey Gitomer is the author of *The New York Times* best sellers *The Sales Bible*, *The Little Red Book of Selling*, and a number of other titles, all of which have been number one best sellers on Amazon.com and have sold millions of copies worldwide.

His syndicated column, "Sales Moves," appears in scores of business journals and newspapers in the United States and Europe, and is read by more than four million people every week. His websites, www.gitomer.com and www.trainone.com, get more than 100,000 hits per week from readers and seminar attendees. And Jeffrey's weekly e-zine, Sales Caffeine, is a sales wake-up call delivered every Tuesday morning to more than 500,000 subscribers, free of charge. (Subscribe at www.salescaffeine.com.)

He is in constant demand as a speaker for seminars, sales meetings, and training programs on selling, customer loyalty, and personal development. His corporate clients include dozens of the country's biggest companies. Jeffrey has been awarded the designation of Certified Speaking Professional (CSP) by the National Speakers Association, and was inducted into the National Speaker Association's Speaker Hall of Fame.

Mobile Beat publisher Ryan Burger was excited to speak with Jeffrey and ask him about the state of sales today. He even got a little surprise info on his background that DJs will be especially interested in. We share some of their conversation with you here. For a complete transcript and to listen to the audio of this interview, go to www.mobilebeat.com.

Also, watch the pages of Mobile Beat for Jeffrey's new sales column, "Gitomer on Sales" in each issue.

Ryan Burger: Tell us a little bit about yourself and how you got into being such an incredible salesman.

JG: Well, I studied sales in the '70s and realized that I was the best at it that I've ever seen. I sold garments in New York City. I sold furniture in New York City. I basically sold in Manhattan—and cold called. I don't know whether you're familiar with cold calling in Manhattan, but "up yours" is a greeting. That's pretty much how it went.

RB: How have things grown from selling on the street and cold calling, etc. to what sales pros need to do nowadays?

JG: It's much different. First of all, there was no Internet. Second of all, there were no mobile phones. So it was kind of a different world. The only way you could reach somebody was either by phone or banging on their door. And banging on their door was acceptable. Well, I don't know if it was acceptable or not, but certainly you didn't have to go through security, have your picture taken, get a badge that wore off in one day, and the elevator was pre-programmed for the floor that you were going to. So it was much different.

In today's world you adapt to the modern mobile way and you play it from there. You look at it from the perspective of, "What can I do within the framework of the allotted tools for me? How can I make this happen?" So for example, if you're

trying to do a wedding and you're looking to be able to book more business...you have to figure out where the internal messaging is for that kind of thing.

So you go online. You use social media. You look at the newspaper for the announcements. You go through traditional ways. But there are untraditional ways. For example, there are people that have been previously married who people think, "Well, those are no longer customers." No. They're in the same age range as other people that are going to get married and their bridesmaids might be the next marriage.

R B: And you're spurring a referral...

J G: ...And if you tell your customer, "Look, I do a weekly relationship e-mail magazine, just a point or two every week on how to build a great relationship, a great loving, long-lasting relationship. Give me all your e-mail addresses. I'll put those people on there at no charge."

Did you know I used to be a disc jockey?

R B: No, I did not!

J G: I did a Sunday night oldies with an iconic disc jockey named Jocko Henderson in Philadelphia...when Alan Freed was doing rock 'n' roll shows at the Paramount Theater, Jocko Henderson was doing them at the Apollo Theater; did more than 100 shows...Every early rhythm and blues act was friends with Jocko. And we did a Sunday night show that we pre-recorded on Thursday night for like three years. And I was known as "Jukebox Jeff," because I was funny and he'd let me on every once in a while...I programmed the whole show. He used my collection to play.

R B: Here's a question a lot of DJs have: How would you suggest DJs overcome being seen as a "commodity," to differentiate themselves and get past that?

J G: Well, first of all, everybody wants a memorable wedding...I want to be known as the best disc jockey on the planet. But someone calls you up on the phone and says, "We're looking for a disc jockey. Can you tell me how much you charge?"

And the guy should say, "Well, I have two fees. If you want me to be lousy, I can match anybody's fee. But if you want me to be great, I'm probably about \$100 more than anybody else. But you have to decide if you want a good wedding or a great wedding."

"I want a great wedding."

"Well, great. Well, then, I'm your guy."

One of the problems that exists with disc jockeys is that they're amateur businesspeople. They may be great disc jockeys but they're lousy businesspeople. And they make \$200, \$500, \$1000, whatever it is for a night of work, and then they have to go dig up the next job. Big mistake. Before they leave that event, they should have comments from at least half a dozen people on film, including the bride and the groom and the bride's mother. "Oh, it's lovely, dah-dah-dah, he's the greatest!"

And they put it on a tripod and you interview these people and then you hug them and then you edit the videos. After 10 of them, you'll be killer. Or you can do the same crap and moan about you're becoming a commodity. No disc jockey's a commodity.

..."Oh, I have a playlist of 10,000 songs." Well, great, but we're only going to play 30. Why don't you tell me that these are the 10 songs that you have to play? You have to play these songs because they get the audience going, they well

Boot Camp for Serious Sales

Jeffrey Gitomer's Boot Camp 2010 is happening Dec. 9-12 at the Green Valley Ranch Resort in Henderson, NV. Attendees who book a room at the resort get meals included. For more info and to register go to www.gitomer.com.

Regular registration is \$1,299 but Mobile Beat readers can use the promo code "MobileBeat" to get \$200 off, for a \$1,099 registration.

up tears; and tell me your favorite song. Tell me your mom's favorite song. Tell me the music they grew up with.

R B: It sounds like you've had experience with hiring a DJ before; at least crossed paths with them...

J G: ...The personality of that disc jockey is what separates one disc jockey from another. It's not a commodity. It's how good are you at your craft? Is sales training a commodity? It depends. I think my competitors are, but I'm not. You know, why are you interviewing me and not interviewing some other guy? The answer is because I'm interesting, I'm fun, I'm informative, and I'm going to give people value. Did I call you for this interview?

R B: Are sales techniques being replaced by the Internet? I mean, the salesperson's not becoming obsolete, by any means.

TURN TO PAGE 56



Understanding Twitter and the Power of the “Re-Tweet”

BY JEFFREY H. GITOMER •

I asked an audience of 200 mature salespeople and sales managers, “How many of you have a Twitter account with more than 500 followers?”

Two people raised their hand. One of them was me.

I couldn't believe it, so I asked again. Same response. Yikes.

It seems as though the mature (seasoned) salespeople are resisting Twitter or simply do not understand what the power in it, and efficacy of it.

With an estimated 125 MILLION accounts and millions of tweets a day, there MAY just be something to it. Especially since the Fortune 1000 are tweeting. Every newspaper and news agency is tweeting. Thousands of small businesses are tweeting.

What are you doing? Are you tweeting every day? Or are you stymied by the process and don't quite know what to do? (Like most people.)

WARNING: Twitter for business has nothing to do with being in your pajamas, having a tough day, heading to the office, or other inane useless information. It also has nothing to do with “tweeple,” “tweeps,” or other buzzwords that are cute and condescending.

Twitter is about informing. Twitter is about passing on information. Twitter is about value messages. Twitter is about connecting. Twitter is about others finding value in your messages or information and passing it on to others. Known as “re-

tweeting,” it's proof that your message had enough value, content, or vital information that people in your network were willing to pass it on to their network. Cool.

BONUS: Your message, your tweet, is actually exposed to 125 million people through Twitter's storing and searching features.

The key action to become searchable is the “hash tag.” If you want to attract others who may be also tagging or searching for the categories that you're tweeting about, using the # symbol in front of your subject words will group your tweets with others of a like nature.

My subjects are sales, loyalty, trust, attitude, buying motives, presentation skills, networking, and success.

Yours might be cooking, golden retrievers, swimming, Phillies, Yankees, travel, cats, or whatever interests you. People tweet about everything under the sun, and you can find them globally in a millisecond.

You can also aggregate your tweets to appear on your LinkedIn account and on your business Facebook page, where people can “Like” you.

In short, you can send information to your entire network every day. And if others find it interesting, or valuable, they will send it to their network.

How does a daily value tweet help you?

1. It challenges you to think and write. Daily discipline.

2. It challenges you to create viral messages so that you become better known as a person of value.

3. It challenges you to create the REAL law of attraction. Attraction = potential customer.

3.5. People will proactively connect with you. If they agree with you, and they respect you, they'll tell others to connect with you as well. You can also create category lists of any kind to compile your own “best of” by subject. Others wanting information on the same subject will find you. People add me to their list under categories like business success, personal

inspiration, and sales. So far, I have been added to 1,187 lists that are re-posting my tweets. You can make your own lists, but the key is to be added to other's lists.

By choice, I do not use Twitter for interactive communication. Occasionally I'll ask a question of my followers (and get instant response), or tell them of an upcoming public seminar, but for the most part I tweet thought provoking statements. Re-tweetable statements.

Yesterday I tweeted: “It's easy to find and attract great people—just be a great person who does great things. #gitomer.” It got a hundred re-tweets in 24 hours and many comments on my LinkedIn account.

Today I'm tweeting: “An objection is actually a sales barrier. Lower the barrier, and reduce their perceived risk, and the sale is yours. #gitomer.”

I try to keep my tweets under 120 characters, even though Twitter permits 140. This way there's plenty of space to re-tweet.

Here are last week's most popular tweets of mine:

- If you're looking to make more #sales NOW, make certain your prospective customers value you and your company first. #gitomer.

- The hardest door to open in #sales is NOT the car door—it's the decision-makers door. #gitomer.

There is a secret to Twitter success. And it's the same secret for all of social media, especially business social media: Wake up and WRITE. Just like I'm doing now.

Is it working? I have more than 22,800 followers so far. You tell me.

If you'd like a list of my 20 best tweets, go to www.gitomer.com, register if you're a first time visitor, and enter the word TWEET in the GitBit box. **WE**

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Jeffrey Gitomer is the author of *The Little Red Book of Selling*. President of Charlotte-based Buy Gitomer, he gives seminars, runs annual sales meetings, and conducts Internet training programs on selling and customer service at www.gitomer.com. He can be reached at 704-333-1112 or e-mail to salesman@gitomer.com.

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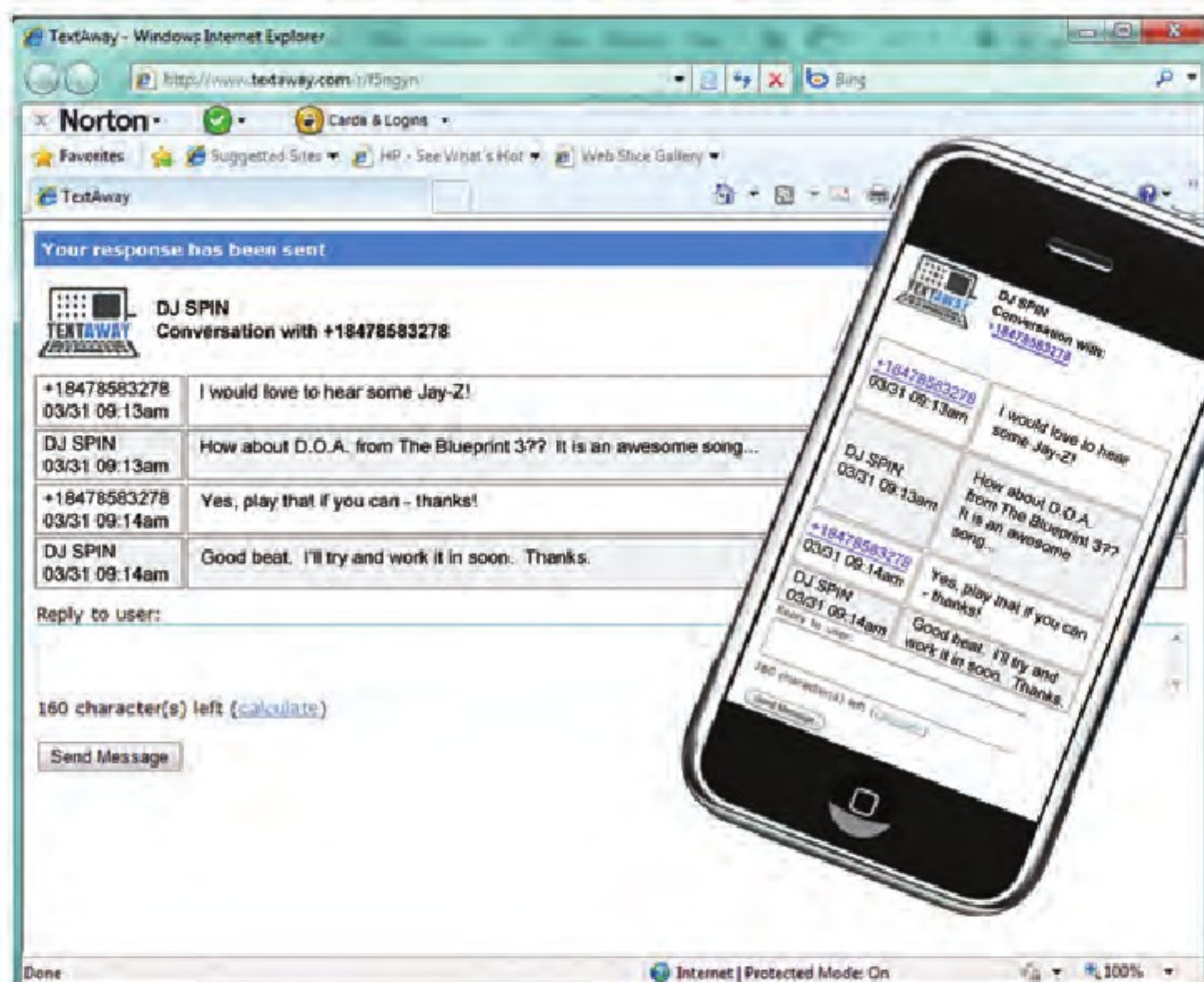
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Facebook Business Basics

LIKE ANY TOOL, FACEBOOK REQUIRES CARE TO BE USED SAFELY

BY JIM WEISZ •

The world is changing before our eyes. Social media is everywhere, and as small business owners, many DJs are embracing the still somewhat new technology. As a result, there's a lot to be learned about social media and how to use it.

For this column, I will focus on Facebook, since it is by far the most-used social media platform. Facebook has over 500 million active users (as of July 2010), while Twitter has over 100 million users. Both obviously have impressive statistics, but the additional 400 million users on Facebook, coupled with the additional capabilities of Facebook make for a good resource for DJ companies.

FACEBOOK OVERVIEW

According to the statistics page on Facebook.com, Facebook launched in February of 2004 and by December 2004 they had nearly 1 million active users. That means more than 500 million people have jumped on the Facebook bandwagon in the last six years—and it's just going to keep getting bigger. Facebook users are loyal—50% of Facebook's active users log on to Facebook in a given day. There are also more than 150 million users who access Facebook through their mobile devices.

Every Facebook user has a "wall," which is almost like a personal home page on the website. It's a place where friends can see your status updates, pictures, links, and anything else you choose to post. It also shows anything that anyone else has posted to your wall too. In regards to all of that, there are privacy options that allow you to choose what content your friends and Facebook users who are not friends can see.

Jim Weisz has been a DJ since 1999, primarily serving the wedding and school dance markets. Originally from Chicago, where he had a thriving DJ business, he relocated to Dallas in 2003 to take a position with TM Studios (formerly JonesTM & TM Century). Once there, he used the web effectively to re-establish his client base within a just a few months. Jim is also a convention speaker and contributes a more frequent version of this column to MobileBeat.com. He can be reached at jim@discoverydjs.com.



REGARDING PRIVACY

Facebook has a plethora of privacy options in regards to the various ways you use the website. There are options for applications, friends, pictures, ads and more. One feature that pertains to privacy is the option to separate the various members of your Facebook friends via lists. The lists tool is useful because you can make a list for any category you'd like. For example, you could make a list for friends and family, another for DJs you network with, and one for clients.

The benefit of this feature is that it allows you to designate what each group can see from your profile. This is particularly important if you have other wedding professionals or clients as friends. Why is that important? Let's say for example you're particularly biased on a certain political issue. You get fired up on a topic and post about it. If you don't use lists, all of your Facebook friends see what you posted in their newsfeed. A local photographer who enjoys working with you and refers you often is offended. Now what happens? Maybe nothing. Or maybe they stop referring you because they were offended. Why risk the chance of tarnishing your businesses reputation for something you post online?

SEPARATING BUSINESS AND PERSONAL

More than likely you already have a personal Facebook page, but do you have a separate page for your business? If not, add that to your to-do list. Your personal page should be primarily for that—your personal life, while your business page is where you can post DJ-related content. Now does that mean you should never post DJ content on your personal page? Of course not. But if you're using your personal account to peddle your DJ business, eventually your real friends might get annoyed and hide you (meaning they won't see your posts in their newsfeed).

I'm friends with a lot of DJs on Facebook. I don't know their privacy settings and how they have their lists set up, but by the looks of it, many don't use that feature. As a result, I see tons of DJs who make multiple posts everyday that are only about their DJ business. Of course work is part of our personal life, so the fact that you're talking about work (DJing) isn't the problem—it's the fact that most people won't have the slightest clue what you're talking about. For example: "Status update: Just realized I forgot to bring extra XLR cables for the wedding tonight" or "Status update: Meeting with John Smith and Jane Doe about their wedding reception."

Concerning a lot of what people post on Facebook, someone might say "who cares," since there is so much mundane content. But there's a difference between mundane posts and posts that have little to no relevance to most of your friends. Do you see your friends who work in an office post about the TPS report they forgot to put a cover sheet on? Or your friend who is a realtor post updates about showing houses to clients? If so, and it's on a regular basis, I would bet that gets old to you too.

So, what's the solution? Use your business page for your business updates. Go ahead and post that you're meeting a bride and groom for a consultation, or that you're excited about a new piece of gear you're showcasing at an event this weekend. It's even OK to occasionally make those types of posts on your personal page, but remember that unless you're using lists so only your DJ friends will see it, most of your friends won't care.

FRIENDING CLIENTS?

I see a lot of DJs posting updates from their personal account where they've linked to a clients name (using the @ sign before their name to link to their page). You can only link to someone you are friends with so that means these DJs are friends with these clients. I personally am only friends on Facebook with a couple clients, as I wait for them to send me a friend request. Why? Well, I don't want them to feel obligated to accept my

friend request just because I am their DJ.

I recently asked some other DJs about how they handle friending clients. Some said they take it on a case-by-case basis. For clients they feel that they have a good connection with, they send a friend request. Others wait for the client to initiate the contact. My personal opinion is that since I wouldn't want my doctor, lawyer, dentist, insurance guy, pool guy, etc. to ask to be my friend on Facebook, what makes me think a client wants to be my friend on Facebook? So, I let my clients know I have a business page that they can join to get updates about my business. If they also chose to friend me on Facebook, I would accept the request. But I am not going to initiate the friend request, so I don't put them in a weird place about how to handle it.

POLISHING YOUR BIZ PAGE

A page for your business on Facebook can be a great resource for new leads. One way a lot of DJs are using their business page is to post pictures from recent events. Then they will send an e-mail to the client to let them know the pictures have been posted and send them a link to their page. The best-case scenario is that the client will go through and tag the pictures of their guests. So now all those people who have been tagged are heading to your Facebook business page to see the pictures from the wedding.

In addition to pictures, under Notes you can also post articles that visitors to your page may find useful. Or, if you have a blog, you can post a link to a new blog article. Either option depends on you creating interesting content that will engage the reader. You can also post links to relevant wedding-related websites or pages of interest to your clients or prospective clients.

As far as getting people to "like" your Facebook page (using

FB's virtual thumbs-up feature), be sure to link to it from your website. You can also send out invites to any of your Facebook friends as well as send an e-mail to all past clients asking them to join your page. You may be surprised at how many will like your page and post a nice comment, which is good for prospective clients to see.

In addition to posting news, pictures and various business updates, you can also use it as a resource to fill dates. You can offer special discounts on particular dates or let everyone know that you offer a gift card for referrals. If you do post offers, be sure that the people who like your business page are relevant to your offers. For example, I've visited numerous DJ business pages that I can see I am one of about 200 DJs who like the page. The page has a total of 250 people who like it. If the business owner posts a promotional offer, it's really only relevant to the 50 people who aren't DJs. It's for that reason I personally recommend not inviting other DJs to become a fan of your page.

The world of online social media is ever-evolving. While it provides a great new tool for DJs to build relationships and build business, it requires awareness of how website features work, and some common-sense thinking about how to approach making those connections with clients. **WB**

Facebook Business Page Tip

Once your page has 25 "likes" you can create a custom URL for it. Meaning, you can name your business Facebook page something like www.facebook.com/xyzdjservice, giving you a better option for linking from your website and in any emails you might send.

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Intercepting Mobile Clients

SNARE USERS OF THE MOBILE WEB BY ANTICIPATING THE TREND'S GROWTH CURVE

BY MICHAEL EDWARDS •

As technology evolves and changes occur by the nanosecond, DJs have to realize that the old "tried and true" methods of doing business will, in many ways, no longer be effective.

To truly stay "ahead of the curve," we must not only be aware of the recent changes that will have an impact on our bottom line, but also prepare to tackle future trends BEFORE our competitors do. It's an ongoing process that can keep you at the front of the pack in your market—only if you never rest on what were successful methods in the past.

I met seminar speaker Brian Lawrence of LocalTrafficBuilder.com at the Wedding MBA Convention in Las Vegas this past September and was amazed to learn from him that 10% to 20% of the incoming hits to our websites are currently coming from mobile devices. Most of us have probably never thought about creating an alternate version of our website that is formatted for a small smartphone screen. Text that looks OK on a 15" laptop becomes impossible to read on a 2" screen. Sure, you can spread it to enlarge the size, but if you don't enjoy scrolling left and right, up and down to read everything on an enlarged, text-heavy page, chances are your clients feel exactly the same way. So why have all that text there when the mobile visitor won't read it anyway?

Code can be added to your website that can actually redirect the visitor to a mobile friendly version of your website, whenever the new code detects an incoming visitor has a screen size below a certain size pre-set parameter, like say 3.5". The text you want them to read will be there

when they are at home in front of their 20" screen or on the train using their iPad, but not when they access the same URL address from their iPhone or Droid. To stay ahead of the curve, you must provide an optimal contact experience for all your clients, each and every time they contact you, regardless of how they happen to access your web content.

If your current website's home page has a slow load time due to flash, complex graphics or lots of photos, impatient customers won't wait while it loads onto their possibly slower or wifi location-limited mobile devices. You can redirect to a separate "landing page" with a quicker load time, or prepare an alternate content version with condensed information, plus one-touch email or phone contact links and a "call to action" message geared for mobile users only. This is a much better alternative than letting them give up and click elsewhere because they'd rather not sit and watch as the tiny load bar snails its way across their screen trying to load your full-content website.

How about creating source-specific landing pages for each website or magazine where your ad is located? How impressed will a potential wedding client be if she's browsing the Bridezilla: the DJ's Nightmare bridal website, clicks on your ad link, and ends up on a special landing page with a link that says "Welcome Bridezilla brides: Contact us today for a special discount on our best wedding package." This approach makes it very easy for potential clients to take the desired next step without any searching or extra effort. Optimize that landing page for both mobile and full-sized screens and you're officially ahead of the curve.

The mobile client is one new web trend to deal with. Here's where Mobile Beat readers can trade ideas and possibly come up with some innovative ways to optimize our DJ websites.

SHOW ME

Ever have a client ask you to duplicate something they've seen on YouTube? A staggering 2 billion videos a day are sought and watched on YouTube, which is now the #2 search engine (after surpassing both Yahoo and Bing and only trailing #1 Google). As more and more of our customers gain the ability to view videos made at other

people's events right on their cell phones and mobile devices, the more in tune with what is "hot" at the moment a pro DJ needs to be. A world

that used to change "overnight" now changes instantly; and what's new is quickly posted online for all to see.

Remember the sudden buzz over last year's video of the wedding party that danced their way down the aisle to begin the ceremony? After being seen by 55 million people and copied by couples getting married for the next few months, it was no longer new and "in"—it was already "out." The key for the modern DJ is to creatively modify and improve upon such new ideas as soon as they appear. This way, you can accommodate the client who wants to "copy" what they saw on YouTube, but you're also giving it a new spin and personalizing their event for them while keeping it fresh and original for everyone in attendance. A copy is never as valuable as an original. Any DJ who improves on something that 55 million people have already seen will be noticed as an innovator and is providing much better service than a DJ who merely watches the original idea and says..."I could do that." (Too late—it's already "out." Sorry.)

Ahead of the Curve readers are encouraged to share any new ideas or innovations... not so they can be copied, but for the rest of us to tweak it, modify it and make it fit our style. **MB**

MAKE IT VERY EASY
for potential clients to
take the desired next step
without any searching or
extra effort.



Michael Edwards is the owner of AllStar Entertainment & UpLighting, in Andover, MA. Full-time since 1979, Mike and his 20 AllStar DJs specialize in Boston-area weddings. He can be contacted at 978-470-4700 or emailed at bostonsbestdjs@aol.com. His sites, www.getadj.com and www.getuplights.com both feature a few "ahead of the curve" ideas of their own.

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BY STU CHISHOLM

WITH A FORWARD BY MARK FERRELL



Stu Chisholm, a DJ since 1979, has worked on radio, in night-clubs, at raves and rinks, as a voice-over artist, and for a wide variety of mobile events. Based on his years of experience and research he has packed over a dozen ways to "Supplement your DJ income...with DJ INCOME" into this concise, practical, info-packed guide.



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How to Avoid Overkill While You “Knock ‘Em Dead”

KNOWING YOUR OBJECTIVE IS THE KEY TO DRAWING UP A WINNING EVENT BATTLE PLAN

BY STU CHISHOLM •

“It was way too much,” the young, newly engaged woman I was meeting with said. “There was all this stuff going on, yet nobody was dancing.” Her fiancé nodded his head in agreement. This was their reply when I asked them why they didn’t hire the DJ they’d seen recently at a sibling’s reception.

This DJ had it all: karaoke, big video screens, uplighting, a massive lighting truss with intelligent lights and lasers that spelled-out the couple’s name, lighted columns, an LED backdrop – the works. Yet the audience was turned off completely, and this couple’s story made me ask myself: Was all of that stuff right for the event?

TACTICS AREN’T JUST FOR THE MILITARY

Each event has different objectives or goals. In order to accomplish those goals, professionals will put together an agenda or itinerary; what a soldier might call a “battle plan.” DJs need to include these overall goals and adjust these plans accordingly, because one size does NOT fit all.

From the description above, it was obvious to me that the DJs from this other company didn’t have such a plan, but simply threw everything they had at the audience in an attempt to entertain without becoming too personally involved. Rather than use their personalities to engage the audience, the DJs hid behind their equipment. The result was that the crowd was overwhelmed and reluctant to respond, and the couple in my office was completely unimpressed!

Unless you have a clear vision of the goal of the event, any plan will fall short. So what is the goal of a wedding? Sure, the goal is for everyone to have fun. Yet

weddings offer a challenge to entertainers, due to their emotional nature. You’ve got two families who might not know each other very well and tensions may run high. So the less obvious but potentially most important objectives of a wedding become clear: to get the two families to mingle, help them to get to know the members of the bridal party and other key people in the couple’s lives, and keep tensions from taking a negative turn by making everyone feel welcome, at ease and a part of the celebration.

THE RIGHT STUFF

In such a setting, then, might too many special effects be counter-productive? For weddings, I tend to limit video use to a photo and/or video montage and ceremony recap during cocktail hour or dinner. If your goal is to get people to mingle, then the last thing you want to do is to give them is an excuse to just sit and watch! This is something that we’ve become accustomed to when it comes to other forms of entertainment. Instead, you want them engaged, not only with your show, but ideally with each other. The personal touch, using routines to get people out on the floor and involved with one another would be far better than the most impressive lighting and video display! Karaoke, too, doesn’t always fit the goals of a wedding reception. It depends on the particular quirks of the families involved. Non-singers and people who shun the spotlight tend to beat a hasty retreat once the call for karaoke singers goes out.

Yet in another setting, this idea is reversed. Consider bars and nightclubs, where the goal is to get people to mingle, and is also to sell alcohol; plus, said people may have come looking to meet that “special someone.” The typical club patron tends to “warm up” with a drink and maybe a meal, so video is a huge plus. A full dance floor can make people thirsty, so planned turnovers give them time to buy

drinks, promoting sales. A turnover is also the best time for karaoke! Well-planned breaks with calculated uses of video and karaoke throughout the night can combine to give both the club and its patrons what they need.

Notorious among the hard-to-please crowds, school dances can vary in difficulty depending on which grade level you’re playing to. The younger, elementary school set may indeed have a very short attention span, but they also tend to follow directions well, making activities easier to perform. Video here will be a distraction. Getting up into the middle and high school years, you might wonder if the only way to get students to participate is to put itching powder on all of the seats! This is the time to break out all of the interactive routines you might use with adults (as long as the content is appropriate, of course), and here you might also incorporate video lavishly! First, you’ll have to accept that a certain segment of this kind of audience will refuse to participate no matter what you do. Secondly, the more lighting effects and visual stimulation you can provide, the more this age group responds. It’s hard to “overdo” a high school dance!

UNEXPECTED COMPETITION

When uplighting first emerged on the scene in my area, it didn’t come from DJ companies. Instead, it was supplied by specialty companies who also supplied ice sculptures, chair covers and other hall decorations. DJs instantly saw the utility in offering it themselves so that they would not only make more money, but also have the added benefit of controlling these lights as part of their show. This ignited a trend that is still going strong after about a decade now.

It could be due to the sagging economy and the need for more dollars, or it could simply be due to the fact that banquet hall owners and managers have EYES, but recently the venues have also decided

to get into the act. The owner of one particular multi-op DJ company in my market lamented to me that he hasn't nearly recouped the cost of his uplighting since the demand dropped due to the halls getting in on the action. Regardless of their motivation, again the question returns to one of goals. This time, there are several conflicting ones to address.

The venue's main goal might be to decorate their rooms with light, but their overriding goal is likely to be the extra revenue stream. The client's goal is to have a nice looking location, but they really don't care how that happens. The DJ's objectives are to decorate the venue with light, but also take it to the next level by incorporating that uplighting into their show once the party shifts from dinner to dancing. To avoid an impasse, I suggest that DJs take this detail to the client. The hall isn't going to just forego the extra cash on the word of a DJ, but if the client informs the venue that they'll be bringing in their own uplighting, then any argument will be settled. This is reminiscent of those long ago days when DJs were mostly amateurs and reluctant to make announcements.

Banquet halls usually had a host or hostess designated to handle this job, and it sometimes took some doing to let them turn it over to the more professional DJ! My tactic was to have the client insist that I handle all of the announcements. Can you say "deja vu?"

One of the benefits of being a DJ in 2010 is that uplighting can now be had for a fraction of its previous cost, and controlling it all has gotten much easier, too. Even if it's not for every function, it's not a burden to have in the old ammo box stocked for those times when it's indispensable.

YOUR MISSION, SHOULD YOU DECIDE TO ACCEPT IT...

The DJ industry has undergone drastic changes over the years, going from being simply a cheap alternative to a band to complete event coordination. As the scope of our duties expands, so must our awareness of every facet of each event, especially the overall goals. Like military tacticians, we must marshal our resources and decide which ones to bring to bear to achieve our goals and which to withhold

to prevent waste and interfere with those goals. This should be the starting point of any event agenda.

Until next time, safe spinnin'! **MB**



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Typhoon Rising

VESTAX SETS UP THE PERFECT STORM
WITH TYPHOON CONTROLLER

BY GERALD JOHNSON •

In this age where cell phone manufacturers arguably have the coolest names for their products, Vestax's marketing geniuses have stepped up and delivered quite possibly the most excellently awesome product name of this year: "Typhoon." And with this new product, the longtime crafter of DJ mixers have impacted the world of digital DJing with a powerful new control option.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

It must immediately be said of the Typhoon that this product looks great. From a stylistic point of view, it certainly adds flair to any DJ rig. Its sleek red-on-black-with-a-touch-of-classic-Vestax-silver color scheme contrasts with the dull grays and blacks we often see from mixer/controller manufacturers.

By normal definition, a typhoon is a "tropical cyclone," a storm that revolves with enormous power, impacting a wide area of the planet. Likewise, by DJ industry definition, the Vestax Typhoon cuts a wide swath as an all-in-one MIDI controller aimed at providing versatility for working mobile DJs, bedroom DJs, and club DJs alike. Featuring two control "decks" with full playback and cue capabilities, the unit is stocked with the essential features for any DJ performance, including touch-sensitive jog wheels, which are quickly becoming standard equipment.

Another key ingredient that the Typhoon provides is a complete audio solution for a laptop DJ setup. Its multi-channel system provides an outboard sound card (a must for laptop jocks) with monitoring, master output and a separate microphone input.

PHAT, FINGER-FRIENDLY FEATURES

A unique aspect of the Typhoon is its refreshing preference for faders over knobs. Its tri-band EQ and gain controls for each

channel use faders, along with the typical channel level and tempo faders (and of course the crossfader). Knobs are only used for effects control and the master output level, and are easily found along the upper edge of the top panel. All other functions (filters, loops, cueing, etc.) are triggered with generally large, well-lit buttons. It is amazing how a simple flashback to mixers and equalizers of years past can break the monotony of simple knobs that can sometimes be hard to differentiate in those dark corners where DJs are often assigned to play.

An even more unique and useful control feature set is comprised of the Typhoon's Song List button and Load Cursor. The first, situated at top center on the control surface for the easiest possible access, gives you one-touch access to your software's list of available tracks. (BTW, Typhoon is optimized to run with TRAKTOR DJ software, with TRAKTOR LE coming bundled.) Below that, the extremely helpful, plus sign-shaped cursor lets you scroll through your music with its vertical axis, then assign tracks to either left or right decks with its horizontal axis. Visually, the "plus" image reinforces the location and function of this track-adding control, further idiot-proofing performance. And a final plus is that it eliminates the need to employ my low-level typing skills during events, freeing up my mind for even better mixing.

The creative use of effects (flanger, echo, etc.) is becoming increasingly common among mobile DJs, after first being used heavily by club DJs. The Typhoon has a built-in effects section which includes filters and echo for those who want to spice up their shows. As mentioned above, knobs are provided for effects control, including selection and wet/dry level. And along with cueing and scratching, the large jog wheels can control the high/low pass filter level in real time, giving you a very cool way to interact directly with your music via your control surface.

STORM STORY: LAST WORD

Typhoon is truly a good piece of gear with very few drawbacks. For me the only detraction really worth noting is the lack of a crossfader curve adjustment, which means that one has to be pretty skilled at the art of the perfect mix (and I am not) to adequately beat-match manually on the unit. For most mobile users, though, that won't be an issue, as the program is equipped with a reliable sync feature that auto-beatmixes for you (which also available with one button push).

From its stylish looks to its great functions, the Typhoon is Vestax's solid solution for the growing population of computer DJs who need for flexibility and portability in a control unit. It is easy to set up (totally USB bus-powered—completely plug and play), easy to carry, and easy to use—a killer combination in any DJ environment. **MB**

www.vestax.com



MINIMUM SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

PC: Windows XP (SP2 or higher, 32-bit only), Vista (SP1 or higher, 32-bit/64-bit), Win7 (32/64)
CPU: Intel Core Duo, 1.4GHz (SSE1) or higher
RAM: 1.0GB RAM or higher

MAC: OS X 10.5 or higher (10.6 compatible)
CPU: Intel Core Duo, 1.66GHz or higher
RAM: 1.0GB or higher

BOTH: Available USB port, CD-ROM drive, hard disk space for music and software

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SOFTWARE EXCITEMENT, ANALOG ASSURANCE

The **VMS4 (Velocity MIDI Station 4)**, new from **American Audio**, is being billed by the company as "the ultimate performance tool" for today's working DJs. The VMS4 is an extremely versatile 4-channel MIDI controller that offers 4 selectable MIDILOG™ (MIDI or analog) channels. This allows it to be used with a computer for digital DJing or as a regular mixer without a computer. In the event of a computer crash, the VMS4 will kick into analog mode, providing digital DJs with a built-in "back-up" system. Compatible with both PC and Mac, the VMS4 comes bundled with Virtual DJ LE software, and will also work with other major programs.



The VMS4 features a built-in touch pad that allows DJs to make selections right from the unit. Other features include dual jog wheels, illuminated rubber knobs for ease of use in dark environments, MIDI-assignable touch strips, and two microphone channels with gain and treble/mid/bass controls. The unit also

offers the option of being used with an Innofader replacement crossfader (sold separately).

The VMS4's other MIDI features are extensive, featuring mappable buttons, rotary pots and touch strips. Check out the company website for a lot more info.

Audio features include: 24-bit/48 kHz analog audio; 16-bit/44.1 kHz USB audio; 10-bit resolution on all analog fader controls; and selectable USB modes, including 4-in/4-out mode for running software effects on phono/line analog channels, or 2-in/8-out mode for running four software channels and master recording.

www.americanaudio.us

THE CUTTING-EDGE OF KARAOKE

Acesonic has announced the release of the **DGX-210**, a **multi-function, multi-format player** with the ability to record and convert CD+G format to MP3+G, making it the first player in the world with this unique and convenient feature. Perhaps



equally as impressive is the unit's low retail price tag of only \$109, making the DGX-210 an ideal candidate for a holiday gift to the singalong enthusiasts among us.

"What makes this particular player stand out among the crowd," says Acesonic founder David Su, "is not only the unique CD+G to MP3+G recording and ripping function, but also the fact that it retains all of the great features our past players had, including vocal recording, a built-in mixer with microphone inputs, digital key control, scoring games and so much more. It's really our most comprehensive and

technologically advanced product so far."

Another notable new feature is the unit's ability to play MP3+G format from a variety of media, including discs, flash drives, external hard drives and SD cards. Because of its small file size and accessibility, the MP3+G format (which is basically mp3 audio plus a graphics track to visually display the lyrics) has become increasingly popular among karaoke users. Consumers are able to download karaoke songs in MP3+G directly from websites, transfer them to flash drives or SD cards, or burn them onto discs. So no matter what medium users have their songs in, the DGX-210 can play it.

www.acesonic.com

A&H UNVEILS ROLLS ROYCE OF DIGITAL MIXERS

Allen & Heath has unveiled the **Xone:DB4**, a fully digital, high-end DJ mixer featuring the Quad FX Core DSP engine, which provides four effects/BPM/loop-record engines with channel EQ filters. Other key features are multi-channel USB audio with MIDI support, analog and digital I/O, an extensive input source matrix, easy-to-read OLED display screen, and USB for recalling user setups.

The heart of the Xone:DB4 is the powerful Quad FX Core DSP engine, enabling each channel to have its own effects bank and BPM detection system, which automatically adjusts all time-related effects and loops to the tempo of the music. There are five effects types (with variations) optimized for DJ use, including de-

lays, reverbs, modulators, resonators and a "damage" effect. Each effects bank has a dedicated expression control and a rotary pot to set the wet/dry level.



In addition to the effects, each channel has a built-in looper with selectable loop length from 1/64 beat to 4 bars using the rotary encoder. No matter what loop length is selected, the Xone:DB4 will always record the maximum of 4 bars, so the loop can be expanded or shrunk at will.

With the mixer's input source matrix, each music channel can select any of the available stereo audio sources: Analog Line 1-4 (switchable to Phono on 2 - 3), Digital 1-4, or USB 1-4. Additionally, the Mic/Aux channel can be routed through channel 1 for further processing.

For much more on the Xone:DB4 go to A&H's dedicated Xone series website.

www.xone.co.uk

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How to Set the Floor on Fire

SERVING UP THE WOW FACTOR IN YOUR CLUB WITH HOT LIGHTING

BY CHRIS BEDKE •

Creating a overall cool atmosphere for a bar or club is essential for making a venue THE local “hot spot” for weekend partiers. Thumping sound, hot videos and tasty drinks are all part of the equation. Another important element is the lighting. Lighting and how it is used can make a great impact on revenues for a bar/club. A well-thought-out lighting system can add a great deal of energy, keep patrons staying longer, and help the club achieve the ultimate goal of more bar sales.

Many mobile DJs are getting into club and bar installs. The income potential triples when you provide a venue with a complete package including the DJ, sound and lighting. Bar owners simply don't want to mess with maintaining sound and lighting, so they are often more than happy to pay more for your services if you handle everything.

I've installed several sound and lighting systems at venues in California over the last few years, and the lighting has always been the main focus. The venues I've worked at have been small to medium in size, but yielded great results for me financially (10% of bar sales during my performance plus a flat rate to DJ) due to the to atmosphere created with the complete sound, lighting and video system I installed.

CREATING THE MOOD

Take into consideration the décor of the venue when designing the lighting plan. You want whatever lighting you install to compliment the space. The height of the ceiling is also a major factor in deciding the type of effects you will use. In one of my venues, (a former winery, turned steakhouse) we had a 20-foot open ceiling with steel support beams. This made installation fairly simple. We chained truss to the beams, ran power and hung our fixtures.

Venues with low ceilings or where the structural support beams are not visible will be more challenging and may require floor mounted trussing. It is also important to have the venue owner check the local building codes before doing any kind of permanent install. I strongly suggest that you have the building owner make any necessary modifications (including running power) for you. Floor mounted truss, in most cases, can be considered temporary and does not require a permit.

LED OR HALOGEN FIXTURES?

The biggest advantage to LED fixtures, especially when it comes to a club or bar, is that they are virtually maintenance free. You will still need to do periodic cleaning of lenses and mirrors, but the days of stocking a dozen different spare bulbs and climbing a ladder once a week are over. I was spending \$180/month on light bulbs for intelligent fixtures at one of my venues before switching over to LED. At this point, just about every popular effect light has been re-introduced in LED and many are less expensive than the original halogen models. The one major thing that can still be said for halogen fixtures is that if you are working a large venue with a high ceiling and need

more punch, halogen may still be the best choice.

BASE LIGHTING VS. EFFECT LIGHTING

It's a good idea to have some base lighting on your dance floor. Lights that can be turned “all on” to light up the area are beneficial to the safety of your dance floor. Many of the new LED fixtures (par cans, strips and palettes) can have multiple uses. In the beginning of the night, they can be used as a dance floor wash to create a warm glow, and later on can be programmed to chase and pulse to the beat. Moving heads can be multi-purpose fixtures as well. They can be used for wash lighting, spot lights (great for karaoke nights), follow spots and more. Many moving heads allow for custom gobos, allowing the addition of the venue's name or logo. You also may want to consider black lights as part of your lighting plans. Black lights create an inviting and mysterious glow on reflective surfaces when the house lights are down, and have become a popular effect in many clubs and bars. Glow parties are a popular bar promotion that can be tied in with glow sticks, florescent decor and luminescent beverage containers. Consider adding a bubble machine with UV bubble fluid and surprise your audience with blue bubbles! Effect and animation lasers are becoming more affordable and there are now American-made, full color (RGB) models that have their own software capable of creating stunning aerial effects, custom graphics and text messaging.

CREATING THE SHOW

Of course, there's more to a great light show than just turning on the lights. Discussing all the ins and outs of light show creation would obviously require a lot more space than we have here, and could fill many articles. Suffice it to say, programming an elaborate light show can be time consuming; but it will pay off in the end.

There are several DMX software options available that can run your entire show at the click of a mouse. Adding your fixtures to the software is very simple and most have preset programs built-in that “recognize” your fixtures. Lights that sync up with the music energize the dance floor and really set the mood. Lighting can be programmed to reflect tempo changes and set to strobe during high energy sections like those rapid-fire drum snares leading into a new song section or track. Use your imagination and try to visualize what the music would “look like.”

When most DJs think about working in a club they think about the music, first and foremost; obviously this is the most important part of a DJ's job. But if you take a closer look at ways you can potentially help the club (and by association, yourself as a club DJ) succeed, you'll see how important lighting is to creating an exciting atmosphere—one that is conducive to dancing...which leads to thirsty patrons and bigger bar receipts. If you're not content to settle for just a music spinner's paycheck, helping your club build a killer light show is a major way to brighten your horizons. **ME**

Chris Bedke (a.k.a. DJ Chris Michaels) has been a full-time mobile DJ/VJ entertainer since 1985. He operates Creative DJs in Rialto, CA. He is also the Club moderator on <http://start.mobilebeat.com>. Stop by the chat board and say “Hi!”

Bar owners simply don't want to mess with maintaining sound and lighting, so they are often more than happy to pay more for your services if you handle everything.

Agile Light Spotted in DJ Airspace

AMERICAN DJ'S X-MOVE LED: A TRULY MOBILE LED MOVING HEAD

BY SETH LEOPOLD •

American DJ's X-Move LED is an ultra-lightweight moving head weighing in at just 10 lbs. With its compact design (7.5"W x 12.5"H x 8"D) this fixture gives mobile DJs an easier alternative to traditional, bulky moving head lights.

The X-Move utilizes a 20W white LED source for its crisp, bright light. This would be equivalent to a 250W halogen lamp. It also features nine total colors (counting white) and nine gobos (counting spot), giving the user as much variation and control as some of its bigger relatives. After messing around with the X-Move LED for a little bit, I was pleasantly surprised to realize that the color and gobo wheels are separate. This allows the user to choose the color to go with any gobo, which can allow some very cool effects, including switching gobos on one color or "gobo scroll" mode.



TAKE THE CONTROLS

The X-Move LED is all about control. It provides total control of light brightness with 100% dimming control. The advanced shutter control helps generate a pulse effect, strobe effect and the wild feature called "gobo shake." This gives a crazy feel to the light as it vibrates its beam of light all over the room.

The unit offers three modes for use: DMX controlled, master/slave and sound activated. It uses a simple four-button LED menu for choosing how the light works. It has six different programmable DMX channels and five built-in, pre-programmed sound-activated shows. The X-Move LED uses micro-stepping motors to achieve crisp, swift movement or a very refined slow movement. The movement is on a 540° pan by 270° tilt.

Since it uses LEDs the unit is rated at 50,000 hours of operation. The LED lights also mean very low power consumption, letting mobile DJs worry less about tripping the venue's breakers and more about the light show itself. The best thing about the unit's LEDs is that they never get hot. So as soon as the show is over you can tear them down and not have to worry about burning yourself. Since the X-Move LED has no duty cycle, it can run all night without over-heating or turning off randomly.

FIELD OBSERVATIONS

I found the X-Move LED to be a very reliable machine. I set it up at many different angles and put it through its paces; every time the fixture performed admirably. The micro-stepping motors truly are amazing. Whether it was quick and bouncy or slowly spinning, movement was very streamlined, no jerks or clicks seen or heard. Because the motors are so clean-moving, switching between programmed light shows is not a awkward thing. In my past experience, when I would switch a show, the moving head would often be slow to respond and would jerk and pause for some time before it began the next show. The X-Move LED switches from show to show with minimal thinking time and a great gobo and color switch response time.

The amount of control the X-Move LED provides is comparable to any larger moving head I have ever used. With depth control for the brightness (0 to 100%) and the nine-range color control, you can program shows that really "pop" or create a rich, smooth background of light to set the mood for the event. It is also well-suited to duty as a wide spot light for wedding couples on the dance floor or a pumped-up pin spot for a disco ball.

With the independent color and gobo wheels, high brightness of lights, strobe effects and the shake control, the user can even create a club-like feel. In the right programming hands, this little machine could look like it was doing what ten older lights would do.

Programming the X-Move LED was very easy. With the four-button display I had no problem at all getting the right settings to do what I wanted. All the DMX programs on my computer easily recognized the X-Move and easily programmed it. Master/Slave controls also worked perfectly, with zero lag time. Also the sound activation controls and the pre-programmed light shows were pretty impressive. These shows really showed off what this lightweight little mover and shaker could really do.

To sum up my experience with the X-Move LED, it really is an excellent light for any mobile DJ. Bright, precise and reliable, it is small enough set up quickly and to hang from smaller trussing setups, but gives an effect approaching the quality higher-end moving heads. It is perfect for busy mobile DJs due to the lack of required maintenance and easy programming. And a street price around \$600 makes it an extremely affordable alternative to investing in a super-high-end moving head that would probably be too complicated to run anyway. Simply put, the X-Move LED rocks. **ME**

www.americandj.com

Mini 4Bar Lights Up the Floor

CHAUVET'S NEW MINI 4BAR™ ECONOMIZES ON THE ORIGINAL WITHOUT SACRIFICING DANCE FLOOR EXCITEMENT

BY MARC ANDREWS •

As a fan of the CHAUVET 4BAR™ from its release a few years ago, when I found out they were releasing a new product related to the 4BAR—the Mini 4BAR™—I was excited to see it.

CHAUVET was able to send me a pre-release product for review and try out. The original 4BAR with is a fantastic piece for the wedding DJ, with a sturdy tripod raising up four low-profile can lights with 108 10mm LEDs. (Not to mention a street price under \$400.) Packaged in a guitar-style case, this is a system that rolls in and out easily and sets up in less than a minute. Control on the original light is both by DMX and internal programs.

The CHAUVET Mini 4BAR cut the price by over 30% (under \$280), mainly by leaving off some of the features; but most won't be missed by the average wedding DJ, which seems to be the primary demographic this system is aimed at. The LEDs went to 75 10mm LEDs; and you lose the DMX control but still have

internal programs and footswitch triggering; plus it was nice to see that it still comes with the great carrying case. Additionally, the tripod is not quite as robust as the one on the original unit, but for its new purpose it still performed well.

For some recent events, I took out either the Mini 4BAR with two original 4BARs (a high school dance with about 500 students in attendance), or just the Mini 4BAR (a wedding with 200 guests). Comparing the older and younger lighting system siblings in action, the effective brightness of the Mini seemed just as strong as the original 4BAR. It cut a nice light beam through the air and filled the rooms nicely with energy.

At both events, the lights served their purpose very well. And even though the overhead lighting at the high school dance could not be turned down, all the 4BARs were still able to set a nice groove and energy for the dance. At the wedding, the Mini 4BAR lit the dance floor quite well, but without blinding grandma off to the side of the reception hall.

Overall I recommend the CHAUVET Mini 4BAR for just what I used it for, an extra light for school dances or as the primary show at a wedding. **MB**



www.chauvetlighting.com

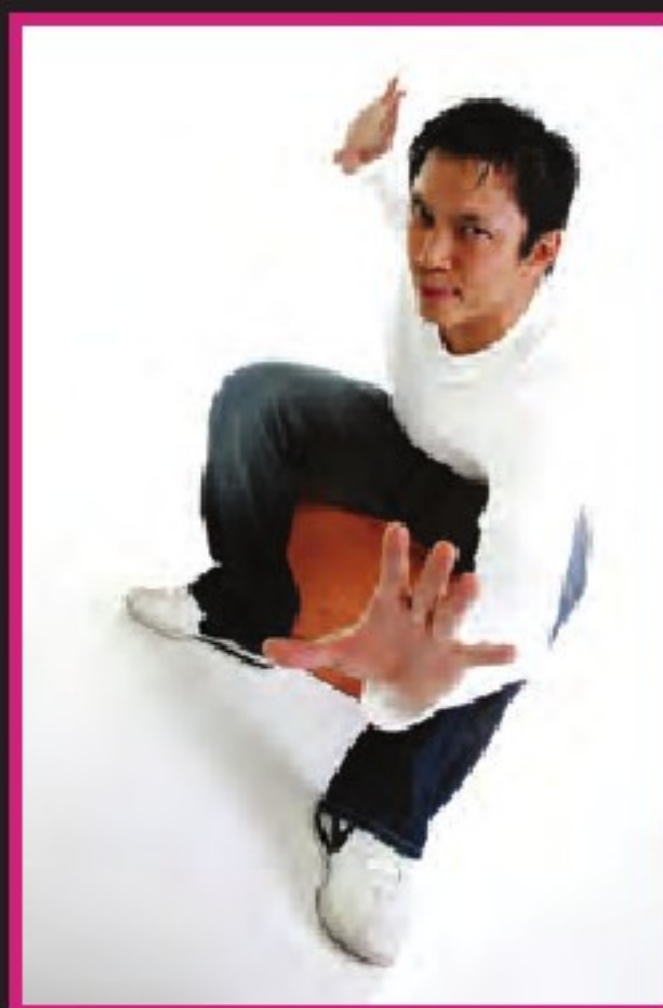
Roonie G Gets Lit Up By CHAUVET

CHAUVET has announced their first-ever endorsement agreement with DJ Roonie G (www.djroonie.com), a unique A/V artist who spins both audio and video as a DJ for clubs, celebrity parties and more.

Additionally, DJ Roonie G specified CHAUVET fixtures inside his nightclub, Mix Ultra Lounge, which held its grand opening in July in his home town of Columbus, Georgia.

"It's an upscale high-energy nightclub designed to deliver the ultimate nightlife experience," says the DJ entrepreneur. "Getting this place together has been both exciting and exhausting. And the lights look amazing!"

Installed fixtures include six



Intimidator™ Spot 250 moving heads, and two lasers, the Scorpion RG55 and Scorpion Storm RG.

DJ Roonie G has crafted his own blend of audio-video content encompassing popular music videos, film footage, comedy shorts and custom graphics. The effect is a stunning sensory explosion for the audience. He is a three-time Club World Award Winner and was nominated for "America's Best DJ" this year. He

has several residencies throughout the country, most notably at Jet in the Mirage in Las Vegas.

"We appreciate and admire DJ Roonie G's talent, business sense and personality," says company Vice President Berenice Chauvet. "He is an electrifying visual artist and superior lighting was the perfect complement for his work. We're very excited about working with DJ Roonie G in the year to come." **MB**

The Zipper Dresses Up the Venue

NEW LED LINE ADDS STYLISH RUNWAY LIGHTS TO BOOST DJ FASHION LEVELS

BY MARC ANDREWS •



Bill Cronheim of Virginia-based Entertainment Systems Corporation (ESC) is known to Mobile Beat chat board regulars as an industry resource

who is always looking for the next big thing. Formerly a touring production outfit, his company is now a dealer for most major lines of DJ equipment, covering sound, lighting and video.

Taking the next step, ESC has recently gotten into marketing its own signature gear line with the TyLED series of lights, including the new Zipper. Best used in pairs, the Zipper is a one-meter-long LED bar with the three standard, fully mixable colors of red, green, and blue with 384 5mm LEDs in total. Out of the box, two of units run very effectively in master/slave mode, and are great for an average wedding or school dance. But using DMX to control the Zipper, it's performance expands dramatically with the flexibility of banks, strobes, chase and electronic dimming. Drawing only 50 watts, the Zipper lets you easily chain 20 units for a fashion runway or other dramatic walkway effects. And with built-in mounts on the long side, chain multiple Zippers to create a panel configuration is as easy as linking the power.

So why start offering his own lights? Bill tells me that at the time that he started this project a few years back, no one was offering RGBAW. "I felt that the RGB were lacking the Orange-Yellow-Amber spectrum," says Bill, "and you couldn't create pastels, just crayon colors."

The TyLED line is named after the president's grandson, Ty, because he's the "light of his life." With a street price under \$180, the Zipper and the rest of the growing TyLED series is available exclusively at EntSysCorp.Com or by calling 800-582-2421.

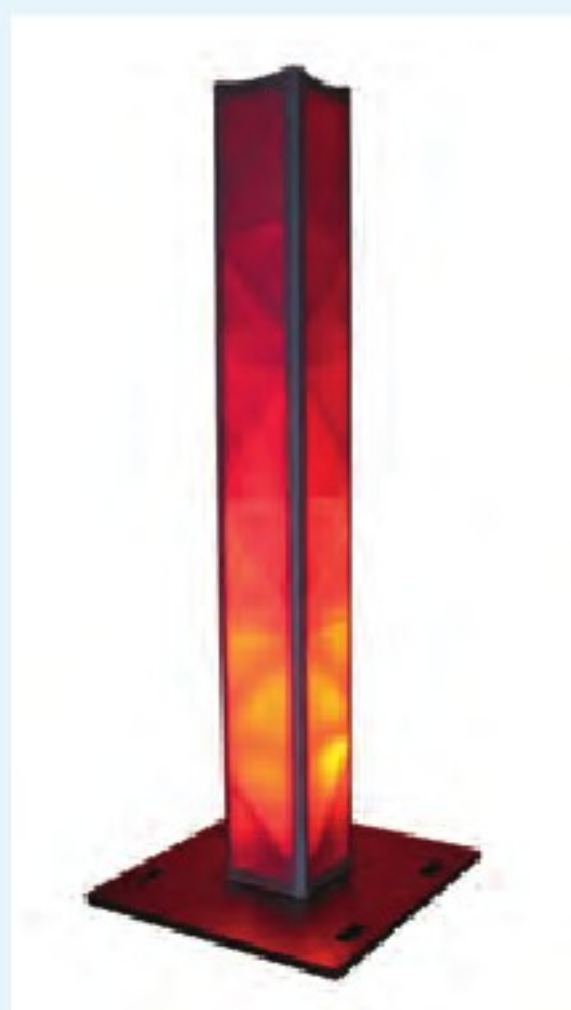
www.entsyscorp.com

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Odyssey Scrim Werks™ Triangular Scrim (models SPATRILG and SPATRISM), also referred to as tripod stand scrims can be used to cover speaker and light stand setups for a cleaner and more professional look. The scrim easily secures to any two-bottom legs of a tripod and to the lower pole tension knob covering 1/3 of the bottom tripod leg area. The SPATRILG and SPATRISM can also be used for theatrical or banquet backdrops with silhouette projections or color wash lighting effects.



Scrim Werks™ Slip Screens™: The Odyssey Scrim Werks™ 5', 8' and 10' long, 12" x 12" Square Truss Slip Screen™ (TS1205/8/10) covers any 12" square truss. By simply slipping it over the truss, a dull or scratched-up truss is transformed into a clean white column. For additional effects, you can illuminate it with a colorful LED light wash. It's another way to generate great background effects and provide structural ambiance to any outdoor or indoor banquet, rave, or theatrical setting.



www.odysseygear.com

Mini-Golf to Go

PROVIDE THE PERENNIAL AMERICAN PASTIME TO YOUR CLIENTS

BY RYAN BURGER •

While wandering the halls at IAPPA (the major trade show geared toward amusement parks, carnivals, etc.), I found something I didn't expect: a complete miniature golf course. It was a portable "putt-putt" system that is inflatable, making it extremely portable, and perfect for DJs that are into the "more play, more pay" concept, as Rob Johnson covers in his Midweek Money column elsewhere in this magazine.



The product was in final development at the time, and after spending time talking with Mark Anastasia, President of Putts Perfect, I can see the connection perfectly. Mark has worked in the inflatable attractions arena for 20-plus years and developed this system for private parties, after-proms, grad nights and similar events. He is working on getting it out anywhere he can. After talking to him about how many DJs are using inflatables, as well as what we have done with our BCP Arcade (as chronicled over the last few years of Mobile Beat) with arcade games, DDR setups, PlayStations, photo booths and more, I piqued his interest in the potential of the DJ market for his product.

So, Mark sent us the three-hole system you see pictured here, and we proceed to use it at several events. We were impressed by the system's ease of set-up and its classy look. In past years we have participated in Skywalk Golf Tournaments (similar to what many Chambers of Commerce do with a Chamber Golf night out, but in a mini-golf environment.) Had we owned this system, we could have provided a much classier looking set of greens.

The system comes with three sets of airframes, three turfs to match, the connectors, cups, putters, stakes, a pump, bags to keep all of the gear in, and, of course, balls. The three-hole system currently costs \$1,299. The full nine-hole course costs \$3,299. More details can be found at Putts Perfect website.

This is a well-conceived and well-constructed system, which provides an enjoyable and mobile mini-golf experience. It is sure to catch the interest of many interactive event clients. We will be offering this next year to our after-prom clients as a quick and easy add-on for their activities. **ME**

www.puttspertect.com

The CDJ-350 player and the DJM-350 mixer, both released in March 2010 by Pioneer, each offer most of the essential features found on Pioneer's higher-end lines, yet at a low enough price point (\$850 and \$750 MSRP respectively) to appeal to beginner and bedroom DJs.

Pioneer has a decades-long tradition of offering high-quality equipment for professional DJs --but that quality has always come at a price. Until recently, DJs just starting out in the industry without a lot of cash on hand usually were priced out of Pioneer's offerings. Not until now has Pioneer offered something this powerful at such a low price point.

According to David Arevalo, Senior Marketing & Artist Relations Manager for Pioneer, "Pioneer is always developing new exciting technologies for creative DJ performance. The CDJ-350 and DJM-350 are designed to deliver those technologies to a broader audience such as the hobbyist or bedroom DJ. We hope to see more products in this same area."

Pioneer paved the way years ago for scratch DJs looking to move away from vinyl with their 1000 and 2000 lines of mixers and digital vinyl CD players. The new 350 units retain much of the basic functionality that DJs relied on in the 1000s and 2000s, albeit in a smaller, less expensive packages geared more toward beginners and other on tight budgets.

MIXING SOLIDLY: DJM-350

Along with Pioneer's typically reliable construction and fader function (including an adjustable crossfader control curve) other features set the DJM-350 mixer apart from others in its class. Soundwise, the unit's Digital Conversion technology takes incoming analog signals and converts them to digital for high-quality sound. Not something you see too often on a basic two-channel unit.

The DJM-350 provides just enough control to create excellent basic mixes, along with some extra touches to help would-be mix-masters create something unique. Three bands of EQ per channel allow for precise tweaking and +9dB to infinity of cut for hi, mid and low ranges. Four types of effects help enhance the mix: Filter, which removes audio from the high or low frequency bands, allowing for dramatic changes; Crush, providing an interesting compressed sound; Jet, that airplane-like frequency-sweeping sound; and Gate, which alters the beat by clamping down on the sound level in a regular pattern, following the beat.

Overall, the DJM-350 is a good, basic mixer, with the added attractions of Pioneer quality and some fun effects to make your mix stand out from the crowd.

INTERACTING DIGITALLY: CDJ-350

Many features that are standard on Pioneer's more expensive offerings have also been included on the CDJ-350. A USB port located on the back of the unit allows the CDJ-350 to act as a full-fledged MIDI controller. It also has the ability to interact with many different types of media. Besides the traditional CDs, another USB port on the top of the unit allows for a USB flash drive or hard drive to be directly accessed. A wide range of file formats are supported, including MP3, AAC, WAV, and AIFF. And the CDJ-350 also includes Pioneer's own rekordbox™ music management software that easily allows a user to manage files on a computer.

The DJM-350 mixer also features a USB port on the top of the unit. This port offers on-the-fly recording capabilities, allowing begin-

A Pair of Penny-Wise Pioneers

PIONEER'S CDJ-350 MULTI-PLAYER AND DJM-350 2-CHANNEL MIXER: QUALITY MEETS AFFORDABILITY

BY MICHAEL BUONACCORSO, JR. •



ner DJs to record their own mixes, and then save them for later listening on another device.

BETTER BASICS, EXCELLENT EXTRAS

Although it's in Pioneer's "budget" line, the 350 still sports features not seen on other entry-level units. Its BEAT Display Function gives you a visual representation of the current position within a song, providing extra help when performing scratches and loops. The unit's Auto Beat Loop Function allows quick creation and editing of loops. Even in this essential feature that you'd expect on any player, Pioneer's precision is still evident despite the unit's emphasis on affordability.

A very useful feature for mobile DJs is Auto BPM Lock, which lets you synchronize two tracks to with a touch of a button. This function makes a coffin-housed combo of two CDJ-350s with a DJM 350 mixer the perfect combo for those who do both mobile events and club gigs or are working on winning their next scratch battle. Auto beat-mix for the wedding crowds, or go fully manual and mix it up big time for that next frat party. And speaking of wild parties, the CDJ-350's shock memory and its Pioneer-standard front load mechanism (without a tray to get bumped and broken) make it a good road warrior unit.

The control layout of both units is very intuitive, with power buttons that are easily accessible on the top of the both devices, yet have to be held down for a few seconds to prevent accidental shut-off. Play/pause and cue buttons are big and well lit. And the display screen clearly shows the track that is playing.

Our only gripes with the unit? In comparison to our CDJ-2000, the scratch wheel had a light, not quite turntable-like feeling to it, unlike the company's digital vinyl players. It would be great if Pioneer could improve the quality of their scratch wheel on their next revision, but we do realize that this is ultimately an entry level product. Other than that, our test units performed excellently throughout our entire test period.

The CDJ-350 is a great unit for those just starting out in DJing, or any DJ with a tight budget looking to replace older equipment. Backed by Pioneer, it's a solid buy. **MB**

www.pioneerdj.com

On the Case: Lighter, Stronger

SKB'S NEW 1SKB-R104
COMPUTER-BASED AUDIO / VIDEO
CONTROL AND PRESENTATION
CASE OFFERS STRENGTH,
MOBILITY AND UTILITY

BY JIM WEISZ •

The new 1SKB-R104 rack case from SKB is basically a new and improved version of their DJ Station (1SKB-106DJ). The official name of the new unit is the Computer-Based Audio / Video Control and Presentation Case, indicating the various applications that it can handle, it can certainly handle many of the new gear setups today's DJs are using.

When the DJ Station was originally released, the biggest complaint DJs had was the lack of a hard cover for the top of the case. The R104 takes care of that, with a very heavy duty top lid. The lid connects to the rest of the case with heavy duty locking latches [1]. The combination of the new lid with the heavy duty latches will ensure that all gear housed in the case is protected.

Another useful feature this new case provides is a pair of side access ports [2]. Near the back of both sides of the case there are openings with removable covers, which make it easy to run cables into and out of the case. The access ports save you from having to run cables out the rear door while trying to keep the unit secure. The two ports should leave plenty of room for all your cables. They also provide some extra ventilation for your rack too.

According to the SKB website, the R104 is made from linear medium density polyethylene, which seems to be a different material than the DJ Station. While it makes the case quite light (only 24 pounds), the linear medium density polyethylene feels more durable and stronger than the DJ Station's shell material. It also seems like it will really withstand the rigors of being on the road and not show as much wear as the DJ Station does. I've had my DJ Station for over five years now and while it still protects my gear like a champ,

visually it has seen better days. I like to think I handle the case pretty carefully but just due to the material of the case it has blemishes from little scrapes and dings. I think this case will stand up to wear and tear better and won't show marks as easily.

The rack case features metal rack rails, which is a nice change from the plastic rails found on the DJ Station. My personal preference is for metal rack rails, so I'm glad they went with metal for this case.

So far, everything about this case sounds great—strong lids, access ports for cables, metal rack rails—so what's the catch? Well, the issue I had with the demo unit I received seemed major on the face of it: I couldn't get components racked properly. The problem was the rack is too wide on the slant. As a result, I couldn't even get my CD player to mount in the rack.

After about 10 minutes of trying to figure out what I was doing wrong, I gave up. I hit the DJ message boards and read some posts from someone who had the same case. From what I read he was able to get his components mounted by squeezing the case so that the screw holes lined up. I tried that and was able to get it to work but it wasn't optimal. It took a fair amount of manipulating and was pretty hard to do on my own. I really needed someone to squeeze the case together while I rack mounted my components. It seems pretty likely that the review unit was an early production model and SKB will fix that flaw.

While this new case doesn't have the same number of rack spaces as its predecessors (the R104 has 10 up top and 4 in the bottom while the standard DJ Station had a 10 x 6 configuration), it's clear that this case bears a strong family resemblance. Hopefully, that means that SKB will be releasing a whole new line of cases in this style. I'd be one of probably many DJs ready to get one if they release a 10 x 6 version.

Other than the squeezing problem, this is a great case. If you're looking to lighten your load but keep your gear protected in a solid rack case, the 1SKB-R104 can get the job done. **ME**

www.skbcases.com



In DJ Toolbox we take a glance at the tools successful DJs use. Give us quick descriptions of how you use your tools and why they are essential equipment for your business. Gear, gadgets, software, websites—anything is fair game.

DJ JAY BRANNAN

**Mobile DJ /
Pioneer DJ Demonstrator**



Rock and Roller Cart (www.rocknrollercart.com) - This has been one of my best tools, saving gear and my back for load ins and outs. Get the models that have inflatable wheels and you're set. Folds up and fits in the front seat of any car.

Odyssey CD Case (www.odysseygear.com) - I have one CD case that is soft-shell and 15 years old, still working and not torn.

DJ Webmin and DJ Intelligence (www.djwebmin.com / www.djintelligence.com) - I rely on these two programs for my calendar, music lists, invoices, and contacts. Great tools and must-haves for any working DJ.

Blackberry Storm - Any smart phone will do, but you have to have one today to stay in touch with your clients.

American DJ Revo 3 (www.americandj.com) - The best single light I own. I use it on the floor in front of me pointed up at the ceiling and the effect is awesome. For the money, it is another must-have.

Back-Up Bag - This is my cord and cable bag that has everything I need, if a cable or cord goes out. You have to have your own back-up bag with adapters and cables and cords at every gig.

Mobile Beat Magazine (www.mobilebeat.com) - Keeping up with the trends and styles of the day helps keep me up on my A-game for my clients!

DJ DAYNA - DAYNA SOLOMON

Mobile DJ / Mobile Beat Writer



PrimeCuts (www.tmstudios.com) - I'd have to say my PrimeCuts music service! I can always rely on them to get me the most current music of so many genres before anyone else. I love having access to songs before they hit big on the radio and also being introduced to songs that I may not use for my gigs, but enjoy listening to!

Social Media Sites: Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, Linked In, etc. - Helps me network and stay connected with other DJs, as well as, promote myself and let others see what's going on in the world of DJ DAYna! :)

Notebook - I know most people use their iPhones nowadays or other cellular devices, but I still carry around a small pocket-size notebook to write down ideas that I get "on the go." I'll hear a song and think of a good mix; so I don't forget to try it out, I'll put it in my mini notebook. Sometimes I hear something inspirational to keep me motivated or focused, or I think of a new goal,



and I like to write all of those down as little reminders to flip back to when I need to. I also write down new tracks I don't have yet that I hear on XM Satellite Radio when I'm driving around town, so I can download them ASAP.

Camera - I love taking pictures while I'm DJing events, so I can keep them as memories of all the gigs I've done and look back on them when I'm "retired." :-) —I also post them to Facebook and MySpace. Soon I will add a Flip Video Camera to my DJ toolbox to show me live, in action, to clients, in addition to creating video memories.

ROB JOHNSON

**The Music Man DJ /
DigiGames Representative**



DigiGames TM 120 Wireless Game Show System (www.digigames.com) - I use game show systems as tools to make my weddings better. I will use a TM 120 from DigiGames to play bridal trivia or Family Feud. It allows me to set myself apart from my competition and actually charge more. I am also able to up sell game shows for the rehearsal dinner the night before the wedding and get a double booking out of one customer!

Blackberry World Phone - I use my Blackberry for scheduling, email, social networking and to be able to keep in touch wherever my travels take me.

Virtual DJ (www.virtualdj.com) - I have found that Virtual DJ software allows me the most flexibility for music, videos and karaoke. It has a great layout and is simple to use.

Facebook and other Social Media - Great tool for keeping in touch with clients and peers throughout the country.

E-V Wireless Microphone (www.electro-voice.com) - My voice is my main tool and my E-V Wireless Microphone is the best quality Mic I have heard.

DJ Event Planner (www.djeventplanner.com) - Great program that helps me run every aspect of my business.

So what do you consider to be your essential tools? Send us in descriptions like the above, and we'll consider your DJ Toolbox for publication. Please send to rb@mobilebeat.com with the subject line "DJ Toolbox." MB

Hobby or Businesses?

THE TAXING QUESTION OF PROFITS AND LOSSES

BY MARK E. BATTERSBY •

It should come as no surprise that not everyone pays his or her taxes. What is surprising is that so many DJs, VJs and KJs fail to report the income from their mobile entertainment activities and, thereby, ignore the many tax deductions, write-offs and tax credits that can produce a government "subsidy" for the mobile entertainment activity.

The Internal Revenue Service will, occasionally, target a money-losing business and label it as a "hobby." Hobbyists can of course, deduct their expenses—but only to the extent of their income. Obviously, even a part-time DJ could benefit from the label of a "business," because they, like many money-losing businesses, can use the expenses that exceed their income (their losses) to offset income from other sources such as wages, savings or investments.

In general, under the tax rules, all income, regardless of either amount or source must be reported. According to the IRS, however, failure to report income from spare-time activities, cash businesses and "hobbies" account for a sizable portion of the \$30 billion or so in unpaid taxes each year. On the other side of the coin, with or without income, treating your activity as a business can result in substantial tax rewards—and a lower tax bill.

BASIC WRITE-OFFS

Everyone can deduct all of the ordinary and necessary expenses of conducting a trade or business. But how can anyone hope to refute the IRS's labeling of his or her activity as a hobby or, probably more importantly, hope to achieve the label of a tax business? The key to treating any activity as a tax business is profit motivation: An activity carried on with the "reasonable expectation" of profits—not necessarily ACTUAL profits—qualifies as a business.

If your venture shows profits in three out of five consecutive tax years, then it's up to the IRS to prove the activity is a hobby. Without profits, it is the mobile entertainer who must prove that the activity is a business, if asked. Fortunately, both the IRS and those attempting to qualify their mobile entertainment activities as tax businesses can rely on a unique, nine-part test to prove profit motivation, or lack thereof.

WHO NEEDS PROFITS?

With profits playing only a small role, the IRS has adapted a nine-part test for determining whether that all-important "profit motive" exists. Among the factors normally taken into ac-

count are the following:

1. The MANNER in which the taxpayer carries on the activity - The fact that the mobile entertainment activity is operated in a business-like manner, complete with books and other records indicates that the activity is engaged in for profit. A change in the method of operating the activity, abandonment of unprofitable methods, along with an attempt to improve profitability may also indicate a profit motive.

2. The EXPERTISE of the taxpayer (or his/her advisors) - Preparing by studying accepted business, economic and scientific practices, or even consultation with experts in the area, may also indicate a profit motive. Of course, where a taxpayer has prepared for or sought professional advice, a lack of profit intent, may be demonstrated if the activity is not carried on in the manner counseled.

3. The TIME and EFFORT expended - Does the time and effort put into the activity indicate the intent to profit? The fact that a taxpayer devotes a great deal of his or her personal time and effort to carrying on an activity, particularly if the activity does not have a substantial personal or recreational aspects, may indicate an intention to derive a profit.

4. Expectation that the assets used in the activity may APPRECIATE in value - Under the tax rules, the term "profit" can also mean appreciation in the value of assets, such as land or other property, used in the activity.

5. The SUCCESS of the taxpayer - The fact that a taxpayer has engaged in similar activities in the past and converted them from unprofitable to profitable enterprises may indicate that the present activity is for profit, even though the activity is currently unprofitable.

6. The activity's HISTORY of income or losses - If there are losses from the activity, are they due to circumstances beyond the taxpayer's control, or did they occur in the start-up phase of the business?

7. The amount of OCCASIONAL PROFITS, if any - The amount of profit, in relation to the amount of loss, keeping in mind the value of the assets used in the activity, is also useful for determining the taxpayer's intent. An occasional small profit from an activity generating large losses, or from an activity in which the taxpayer has made a large investment, would not generally

indicate that an activity engaged in for profit.

Obviously, substantial profits, though only occasional, would indicate an activity is for profit, especially where the occasional losses are comparatively small. Moreover, an opportunity to earn a substantial ULTIMATE profit in a highly speculative venture is ordinarily sufficient to prove that all-important "profit motive," even though losses or only occasional small profits are generally generated.

8. The financial STATUS of the taxpayer - Profit motive may be indicated where the taxpayer is not wealthy or does not have substantial income or capital from sources. Substantial income from sources other than the activity (particularly if the losses from the activity generate substantial tax benefits) may indicate that the activity is not for profit, especially if there are personal or recreational elements involved.

9. Elements of personal pleasure or RECREATION - The presence of personal motives in carrying on an activity may indicate the activity was not engaged in for profit, especially if there are recreational or personal elements involved. On the other hand, a profit motivation may be indicated where an activity lacks any appeal other than profit.

Even the IRS will admit that these are merely guidelines for determining the existence of a profit motive and no single one, by itself, is conclusive.

FIGHTING TO BE A BUSINESS

Should the IRS label a mobile entertainment activity a hobby, it is still possible to win in court, but it will not be easy. In fact, the U.S. Tax Court recently reviewed the activity of one taxpayer and considered the nine factors already mentioned. As the court noted, this particular activity was not operated in a business-like manner.

The taxpayer argued that she kept good records, but the court countered, saying the manner in which the taxpayer maintained her records, specifically without any underlying analysis of how to make the activities profitable, was more indicative of someone preparing for an IRS examination than someone with the actual and honest objective of making a profit.

The taxpayer also argued that she spent 60 to 80 hours each week working on the activity. The IRS countered that the time the taxpayer devoted to her marketing activities should

be discounted because much of the time was pleasurable, included socializing with friends, and had the added benefit of allowing the taxpayer to claim business expense deductions for many of her personal expenses.

IT IS NOT A BUSINESS UNTIL STARTED

Obviously, qualifying your mobile entertainment activity as a business does not mean immediate tax deductions for all expenditures. Expenditures made before the activity was actually a business, before it offered its services to the public, are not usually tax deductible. That means start-up expenses are capitalized, and become assets of the mobile entertainment activity.

Everyone who pays or incurs business start-up costs and who subsequently enters the business can choose to expense and deduct up to \$5,000. The remaining start-up expenses, including legal and accounting fees, are amortized or deducted over a period of 180 months beginning with the month in which the business began, or was acquired.

After the activity is in operation, the only limit on deductions for legitimate expenses is the "reasonable and necessary," tax law test. Of course, tax deductions for the cost of the equipment used in the mobile entertainment activity cannot all be deducted at one time. An immediate deduction for business assets with a life longer than the immediate tax year would obviously distort the income (or loss) of the activity. Thus, those capital expenditures are depreciated or written-off over the period they can be expected to be useful to the activity—or the useful life our lawmakers have decreed for those business assets.

NOT A "HOBBY" BUT A LIVELIHOOD

It should come as no surprise to any DJ, VJ or KJ, that Uncle Sam wants to share in any money made from your mobile entertainment activity. What may be surprising, however, is that the government, in the form of our tax laws, is willing to pick up a portion of the expenses of that activity—that is, if you can qualify the activity as a "business." In essence, the ability to use the activity's losses to offset other income amounts to a "subsidy" of the loss-generating mobile entertainment activity. That subsidy is equal to the amount of taxes saved—15, 20, even as much as 35 percent, depending on your personal tax bracket. Is your mobile entertainment activity a "tax business?" It's up to you to make sure it is. **MB**

Mark E. Battersby is a freelance writer with offices in the suburban Philadelphia community of Ardmore, PA. Mark's features, columns and reports have appeared in leading trade magazines and professional journals since the early 1980s. When not actually writing, Mark spends most of his time digging for exciting tax and financial strategies to write about.

Are You Ready?

SIX QUESTIONS EVERY ENTREPRENEUR SHOULD ASK BEFORE STARTING A NEW BUSINESS

As the job market continues to lag behind, inspiring terms in the media like "jobless recovery," many disenfranchised professionals are thinking of starting their own businesses. While the rewards could be greater than their old salary, so are the risks, begging the question "Am I ready for this?"

Andrew Oman, founder of the Olive Tree Network (www.olivetreenetwork.com)—an organization devoted to helping entrepreneurs evaluate their risks, find funding and get started in business—believes answering a few simple questions can help new entrepreneurs find their footing.

"One of the greatest concerns that most entrepreneurs face is whether their business will be sufficiently lucrative to replace the income that they are giving up by taking themselves off the job market," he says. "This concern is referred to as opportunity cost. By answering a few questions, most entrepreneurs can evaluate their business idea and determine whether this opportunity is better than working for someone else. These questions should be answered before spending the time necessary to develop a business plan."

1. What is your product or service, and how it is different than your competition?

This sets the stage for the risk assessment. If your product or service isn't very different or it's not delivered in a unique fashion, you may already have the odds stacked against you.

2. What is your management background and expertise that allows you to provide your product or service?

Your resume should be comparable to that of other senior managers in your field. Credibility is important to customers and clients, and if you haven't walked the walk, people won't believe you when you talk the talk.



BY RACHEL FRIEDMAN •

3. Who will be your customers?

If your customer base is rich with mass consumer possibilities, or deep-pocketed clients, you're off to a good start. If you can sell to a wide range of customers, you'll have a better shot at meeting your business goals.

4. How will you market to your customer?

Knowing your customer is important, but knowing them is meaningless if you don't know how you'll reach them to educate them on your company and sell to them. Marketing is a major expense, so understanding this strategy will also help you figure out how much capital you'll need to make it work.

5. Who are your major competitors?

There is a difference between entering a field that is new, with few competitors, and going against big companies with deep pockets. You may need to raise more capital if you are going up against some heavy hitters.

6. What are your start-up expenses?

These are the one-time expenses that need to be considered prior to beginning business operations. Setting up an office, creating business cards, buying software and other costs need to be considered in order to determine how much funding you'll need to take your best shot.

"Regardless of your answers to the questions, the primary thing you need is passion for your venture," Oman adds. "You can have the best financial model, a receptive audience and compelling marketing, but if you're not absolutely passionate about your new venture, you won't have the drive it takes to bring it all to fruition. All you're doing is going from one miserable existence working for someone else to another miserable existence working for yourself. Choose a venture that makes you jump out of bed in the morning with anticipation for the day, and you'll be equipped with 90 percent of what you need to succeed." **MB**

J G: No.

R B: But how's the Internet tying that whole thing together and making it, maybe easier for the salesman?

J G: ...I would put my video testimonials on the Internet and say, look, if you really want a memorable thing, I'm your guy, call me. Here's my mobile number and I'll talk to you personally about what's involved.

R B: It's not about the tools they use at all. It's about the benefit.

J G: Exactly. I think it's important for the disc jockeys to understand that they are in the memory business and the emotion business, not in the price business. "Well, we have a budget—" No, you don't have a budget. You have an amount in mind that you would like to spend. But in the final analysis, are you going to remember you spent \$100 or you remember you had a great wedding?

R B: Right on. You're selling a result to them.

J G: Exactly. Actually, we're selling an outcome. What are people going to say about it? What are they going to Facebook post about it? And why isn't your disc jockey saying, "Hey, listen, I'm bringing my computer, and while the show is on, you can tweet about it." Anybody doing that?

R B: I haven't seen that yet, no. I've seen people on their iPhones typing.

J G: You know why they're not doing it? Because they're

too busy bitching that they're a commodity. They could be Facebook posting or tweeting couldn't they?

Why don't you get a couple of your disc jockeys to come to our boot camp in Las Vegas?

R B: Tell me a little bit about that...

J G: Yeah. I'm going to be there and so are a few of my friends...It's a real hootenanny. It's not just a boot camp. It's like the best time you can have on the planet without music.

R B: A hootenanny. Okay.

J G: It's at the Green Valley Ranch resort in Vegas, which is in Henderson, just off the Strip. It starts on December the 9th and goes through the 12th. It's Thursday night all the way through Sunday afternoon. It's phenomenal. If your guys want to get a lesson, that's the deal.

R B: One other quick question. Charlotte, North Carolina is where you're based...Sound Choice, one of the vendors that we're working with at our Vegas conference is based in Charlotte. You ever go out and sing karaoke?

J G: Yeah.

R B: I imagine you're an outgoing guy, but—

J G: When I found karaoke it was about 1989. And I sang "In The Still of the Night" at one of these bars, and I said, this is the coolest thing I've ever done in my entire life. So I started to go... And then a buddy of mine, Keith Chubb, Chubby's Karaoke, started in Charlotte, and he actually worked for Sound Choice for a while. So I have a real close connection there.

And I would go to a bar three nights a week, never have a beer, take my laptop, and sing. When it wasn't my turn, I would write. And I don't know if you've ever been to bars in Charlotte. I'll just say it was an anomaly to bring your laptop into a bar and not drink. But I constructed a whole course on presentation skills to karaoke because I would see guys that were good singers that got no audience reaction. And I would coach them into getting a standing ovation.

R B: Making a show out of it, more than just having a good voice.

J G: Right. It's a performance. It's not a presentation. And you have to perform. Two nights ago we went to see Lady GaGa. Is she the greatest singer in the world? No. But top-five performer? You bet.

R B: Any parting words for all the DJs out there?

J G: Spend all of your time building your business instead of complaining about your business and you'll be fine.

I have a book, *The Little Gold Book of YES! Attitude*. Start with that. And then, get *The Little Black Book of Connections*. And between the two of those books, that will give you everything you need to know in your local community to double your business. But it starts with, how's your attitude? Because if your attitude's not good, neither is your business. Once you have your head screwed on straight, then it's time to go out and start building it. But in the meantime, capture every e-mail address and stay in touch with every person weekly. **ME**



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SOMETIMES MOBILE DJS WITNESS EVENTS THAT GO WAY BEYOND ENTERTAINMENT

BY TOM CATUCCI •

My event last night, a fundraiser booked on very short notice due to the backing out of the previous year's DJ, turned out to be one of those events that makes you stop and RE-realize that there really are angels among us.

The event took place at a fabulous, sprawling, multi-million-dollar horse farm in northern Bergen County, New Jersey. The charity was to raise money for children in countries such as Peru, Egypt and others, specifically to support doctors in their efforts to immunize children with measles vaccine and to operate on deformed and disfigured children with severe facial and other impairments.

Turns out that the two women in charge of giving me direction and planning for the event, who simply introduced themselves as Colleen and Stephanie, were actually two of the surgeons involved in this endeavor. Never once did either refer to themselves to me as Dr. Colleen ____ or Dr. Stephanie ____ . I had no way of knowing they were doctors. In fact, not only are they surgeons, but they are among some of the most capable and respected in their field.

As the evening progressed it became apparent to me that these doctors and the other volunteers in their group of care providers involved in this cause might well have been the GREATEST Americans I've ever encountered in person. I have very few details, (as I mentioned, this was a last-minute booking) but what I deciphered from the program is that this group of extremely professional people travels abroad, for the sole purpose of tending

to as many unfortunate infants and children as possible; and the process is repeated with frequency.

After viewing a photo montage of recent medical missions on the tent ceiling, along with probably 200-plus guests/supporters, I have to tell you that my heart swelled with pride to witness my fellow Americans, people who are so financially successful (apparent by their astounding surroundings), who could easily opt for a vacation in the French Riviera or some other Paradise, instead choosing to devote a considerable portion of their lives, time and expertise to helping humankind, beyond our nation's borders. It certainly ranks among the times I've been most proud to be an American, living amongst such selfless, wonderful American brothers and sisters.

Do you think maybe that's what God had in mind for the human race? Hmm...

"Only in America?" Maybe, maybe not, but for certain, more often in America than anywhere else on the planet.

When the curtain falls for me for the last time, it might be nice to be known as the best DJ or a really great vocalist, maybe one of the world's richest men but...not gonna happen, nope, none of the above. But, in truth, these volunteering individuals WILL be known to those of us who witnessed their contribution to some of God's needy children, as the "best of the best" people on earth.

Thank you Dr. Colleen and Dr. Stephanie, God bless you, your team and your work. **ME**

Tom Catucci owns Dancin' Machine DJ Service serving the New York City metropolitan area.



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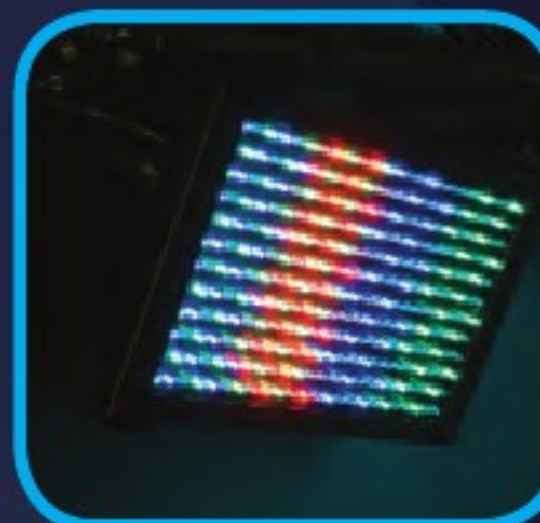
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